

The Most Excellent Way

The Believer's Position and Condition

OR

Our Standing IN Christ and Our Spiritual Walk

I. It is important to understand and BELIEVE (with right understanding – in light of God's Word) what the Bible says about our Position and our Condition (Walk).

A. Our Position is the work of Jesus – and it is received by faith. It is indeed new life!

1. Through faith alone – only faith – does God reward, give, bestow, grant, give us His favor. If we are true believers in and on the Lord Jesus Christ, yet are weak – we have precisely the same title and position (standing) as the most illustrious saint.

- JOHN 1:12 NIV ~ *Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God (sons of God, KJV).*
- 1 JOHN 5:1 KJV ~ *Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God:*
- 1 JOHN 3:2 KJV ~ *Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.*
- REVELATION 1:5 NIV ~ *And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, ...*
- COLOSSIANS 2:10 KJV ~ *And ye are **complete** in Him, which is the head of all principality and power:*
- ROMANS 5:1-2 NKJV ~ *Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we **stand**, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*

- **HEBREWS 10:19 NKJV** ~ *Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ...*
- **ROMANS 5:1-2 NKJV** ~ *Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we **stand**, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*
- **HEBREWS 10:19-20 NKJV** ~ *Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, ...*
- **EPHESIANS 1:3 NKJV** ~ *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 1:6 NKJV** ~ *... to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.*
- **EPHESIANS 2:4-5 NKJV** ~ *But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ...*

2. Everyone of these wonderful things is true of EVERY true believer. Not one item in this glorious inventory is said to be gained by
- prayer,
diligence in service,
church-going,
tithing,
self-denial,
holiness of life,
or any other description of good works.

All are those things in the Scriptures are gifts from God through Christ and belong to *every* believer.

3. Jailer in Philippi

- **ACTS 16:25-31 NKJV** ~ *But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.*

²⁶*Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed.*

²⁷*And the keeper of the prison, awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open, supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about to kill himself.*

²⁸*But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, "Do yourself no harm, for we are all here."*

²⁹*Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas.*

³⁰*And he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"*

³¹*So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household."*

4. In the instant the jailer believed with his heart and confessed with his mouth that Jesus was his Lord,
 he was justified,
 he had peace with God,
 a position (standing) in His Grace,
 a sure hope of glory.

He received the gift of eternal life, was made accepted in the full measure of Christ's own acceptance, was indwelt by and sealed with the Holy Spirit, by whom also he was baptized into the mystical body of Christ – the church of God.

Instantly he was clothed with the righteousness of God (Roman 3:22), quickened with Christ, raised with Him, and *in* Him seated in the heavenlies.

5. The jailer's Condition (State) may have been quite another matter. Certainly, it was far, far below his exalted Standing in the sight of God. He did not become royal and priestly all at once, and heavenly in his Condition (walk), as he was at once in his Position.

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II. The Bible contrasts our Position (Standing) with our Condition (our Walk): There is a divine order, under grace first to give or bestow the highest possible standing, and then to exhort believers to maintain a Condition (to walk) in accordance with our Standing.

We are like beggars lifted up and set among princes, and then exhorted to be princely:

- **1 SAMUEL 2:8** KJV ~ *He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the LORD'S, and he hath set the world upon them.*

There is a clear distinction between the Standing and State of the believer. And the Scripture shows us that we are not on probation to see if we are worthy of an inconceivable, exalted position, but by confessing our utter unworthiness, we receive the position wholly as the result of Christ's work.

Positionally, we are "perfected forever" (Hebrews 10:14), but looking within at our Condition, we must say, as Paul said:

- **PHILIPPIANS 3:12** ~ *Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.*

Jesus gave us our Standing. His Holy Spirit will bring our character into perfect conformity to the Position that was ours at the instant we believed.

We grow IN grace ... not INTO grace.

A prince, while he is a little boy, is just as willful and as ignorant as other little boys and girls. Sometimes very obedient and teachable and affectionate, and then he is happy and approved. At other times he may be unruly, self-willed, and disobedient, and then he is unhappy and perhaps is chastised. But he is just as much a prince on the one day as on the other. Hopefully, he will learn to bring himself into willing and loving subjection to what is right, when he will be more princely, but not more truly a prince. He was BORN a prince.

For every true son and daughter of the King of kings and Lord of lords, this growth into kingliness is assured. In the end, Standing and State, character and growth, will be equal.

**Growing in grace is maturing spiritually under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
Jesus said: "It is finished" – and He will finish us.**

**Standing is not the reward of the perfected character.
The character is developed from the Position.**

POSITION

Our Standing IN Christ

• **1 CORINTHIANS 1:2-9 NIV**

To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ — their Lord and ours:

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I always thank God for you because of His grace given you in Christ Jesus. For in Him you have been enriched in every way — in all your speaking and in all your knowledge — because our testimony about Christ was confirmed in you.

Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.

CONDITION

Our Spiritual Walk

• **1 CORINTHIANS 1:11 NIV**

My brothers, some from Chloe's household have informed me that there are quarrels among you.

• **1 CORINTHIANS 3:3**

You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men?

• **1 CORINTHIANS 4:18**

Some of you have become arrogant, as if I were not coming to you.

• **MATTHEW 16:23**

Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men."

• **COLOSSIANS 3:8**

But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips.

POSITION
Our Standing IN Christ

- **1 CORINTHIANS 6:11**
And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.
- **1 CORINTHIANS 6:15**
Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never!
- **COLOSSIANS 1:12-13**
... giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. For He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son He loves, ...
- **COLOSSIANS 2:20**
Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules:
- **MATTHEW 5:16**
Jesus said: "In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."
- **COLOSSIANS 3:1**
Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

CONDITION
Our Spiritual Walk

- **COLOSSIANS 3:9**
Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices
- **ROMANS 6:6**
For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin.
- **MATTHEW 5:14**
Jesus said: "You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden.
- **2 TIMOTHY 1:9**
... who has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of His own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, ...
- **EPHESIANS 5:8**
For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light.
- **1 THESSALONIANS 5:5**
You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness.
- **1 THESSALONIANS 5:9**
For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

POSITION
Our Standing IN Christ

- **EPHESIANS 5:8**
For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light.
- **1 THESSALONIANS 5:6**
So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled.
- **1 THESSALONIANS 5:11**
Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.
- **JOHN 17:17**
Jesus said: "Sanctify them by the truth; Your word is truth."
- **HEBREWS 6:1**
Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, ...

CONDITION
Our Spiritual Walk

- **1 THESSALONIANS 5:10**
He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with Him.
- **HEBREWS 10:10**
And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.
- **1 CORINTHIANS 1:30**
It is because of Him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.
- **HEBREWS 10:14**
... because by one sacrifice He has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.
- **PHILIPPIANS 3:15**
All of us who are mature should take such a view of things.

- **EPHESIANS 4:1-2 NKJV** ~ *I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*
- **HEBREWS 12:1-2 NKJV** ~ *Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ²looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*