

Benefits of Position in Christ

In this dispensation of the Church, there are many benefits the believer has which are above and beyond anything that Old Testament saints had. We are not better people. But, we have more assets to work with. Much of our benefits are the result of our Position in Christ. This is sometimes called positional truth.

But before we move on, let us think about what was important to the New Testament writers concerning the Old Testament believers. The writer of the letter to the Hebrews focuses on the person and work of Jesus Christ. It was prophesied, it was promised in the Old Testament. Paul and other writers focus on Jesus. Our response to Jesus is to have faith. In chapter 11 of the letter to the Hebrews is the so called Faith Hall of Fame. That is how the believers in the Old Testament were to operate. Abraham is highlighted in several places for his faith. Moses, David and others were celebrated for their faith. That is no different in the New Testament. We are to operate on the basis of faith. Salvation, or as Paul calls it, justification is by faith alone in Christ alone. Sanctification, or phase 2 salvation is by faith dependence on the Holy Spirit.

Because we are “in Christ” and because the Angelic Conflict is centered in the conflict between the demon world and Jesus Christ, we in the Church Age find ourselves in the intensified stage of the Angelic Conflict. But we have the armor of God.

Ephesians 6:13 Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.

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Stand firm. It says to stand firm. It does not say to attack. We leave the attacking to Jesus Christ and the angelic beings. This is an infinitive. That is the purpose of the armor of God, to stand firm.

Resist. Another form of the verb to stand firm. Again it is an infinitive showing purpose.

Ephesians 6:14 Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness,

Stand firm. Paul follows the infinitive of “stand firm” with the imperative of “stand firm.” This should get our attention. We do not surrender to our sin nature or to the world. We stand anchored in the Word of God and the assets given to us at salvation. And again, there is nothing here about attacking. There are some churches that suggest the believer should seek out and pick a fight with demonic forces. But the command is to stand firm.

Ephesians 6:15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

Ephesians 6:16 in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

Ephesians 6:17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

First let us review some points on positional truth. Then let us look at some unique benefits of being “in Christ.” This should be a review since

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“in Christ” has already been the focus of two previous lessons. Plus Herman taught this previously. Let me emphasize one more time. This doctrine is important. It is the sphere in which we live our Christian lives. “In Christ” did not exist in the Old Testament. This is something new and unique in the Church Age.

The term “in Christ” is drawn from the vocabulary that the apostle Paul uses throughout his epistles.

An early 20th century (in other words in the early 1900’s) Greek scholar, Adolf Deissmann understood this phrase “in Christ” in a spatial sense. Below is a picture he used to illustrate “in Christ.”¹

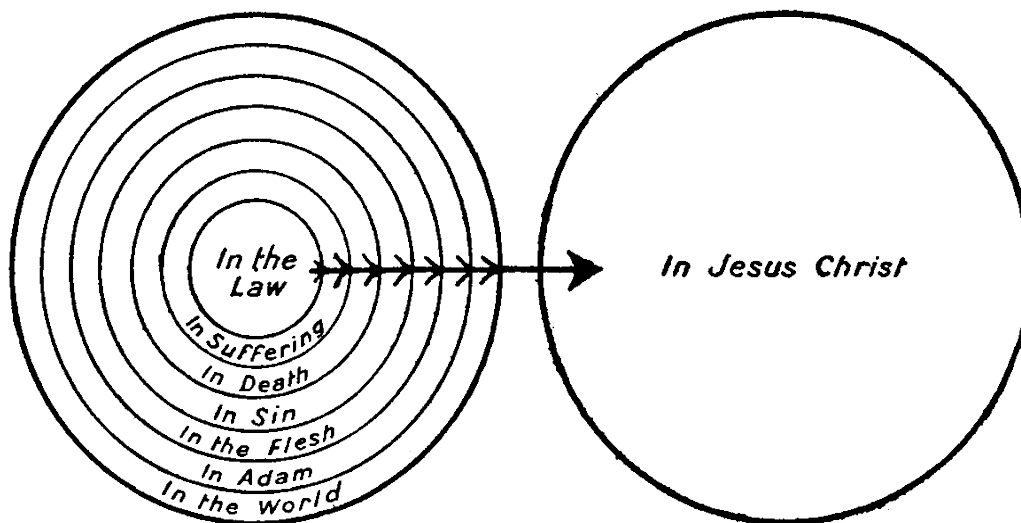


DIAGRAM 4.

The seven spheres of evil apart from salvation in the experience of the ‘old’ Paul.

DIAGRAM 5.

The one sphere of salvation in the experience of the ‘new’ Paul.

Paul uses this term to explain our new standing with God. We are “in Christ.” Paul associates many blessings the Christian receives at the point of faith in Christ with “in Christ.”

¹ Adolf Deissmann (1972). *Paul*. p197

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This position in Christ is sometimes referred to as “positional truth” or “position in Christ.”

What follows are points from Herman’s lesson on “in Christ” when he taught Ephesians².

Positioned in Christ

1. Positioned in Christ is unique to the Church Age believer. In no other dispensation is there such a place as being *in Christ*. The moment one believes in Jesus Christ as Savior—he does not become a member of the race or nation of Israel—God the Holy Spirit enters him into union with Christ forever. You cannot lose your position in Jesus Christ. You did nothing to put yourself into Christ, you can do nothing to take yourself out of union with Christ. It is eternally yours...due to the Faithfulness of God.
2. Means of Positioned in Christ: Non-meritorious faith in Jesus Christ as your Savior.
3. Mechanics: Position in Christ is by the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Acts 1:5; John 17:21-22; 14:20 and chapter 15; 1 Corinthians 12:13.
4. Characteristics of Position in Christ:
 - a. Not an experience, or emotional, nor ecstatic.
 - b. Not progressive—cannot be improved.
 - c. Not related to human merit or works or any performance, it is by grace.
 - d. Eternal in nature; neither God nor angels nor man can change it.

² https://www.springvalleybiblechurch.org/Audio/Ephesians/notes/2019-11-10Sunday_Morning.pdf

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e. Obtained in total at the point of belief in Jesus as Savior.

5. Our Position in Christ explains election and predestination; two doctrines that many believers are so confused about, and we will study them in Ephesians chapter 1. Both are defined and understood by the believer's position in Christ. Believers are elected and predestined *in Christ*. No one is elected or predestined outside of Jesus Christ. Every believer shares the election of Jesus Christ. When you are put in Christ, then you share the election of Christ and share the predestination of Jesus Christ.
6. Positioned in Christ also clarifies sanctification. Ephesians 1:3-6.
7. (one that legalists resent) Every believer—carnal, sinful, or spiritual is positioned in Christ. 1 Corinthians 1:2 and 30. Here, in Christ, is true equality of all believers.
8. Our being imputed with perfect Righteousness is from our Position in Christ. 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Corinthians 1:30.
9. Our being in Christ protects every believer from Divine Judgment in eternity: Romans 8:1—no, your sins will not find you out! You are in Christ. Everyone who believes in Jesus Christ as Savior is imputed with perfect Righteousness which means no believer will be at the Last Judgment.
10. Being in Christ qualifies every believer to live with God forever. 1 John 5:11-12. Therefore, this guarantees Eternal Security Romans 8:38-39.
11. Because you are in Christ, every believer shares many things with Christ.
 - a. We share the life of Christ: eternal life. 1 John 5:11-12.

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- b. We share the perfect righteousness of Christ.
2 Corinthians 5:21.
 - c. We share the election of Christ. Ephesians 1:4.
 - d. We share the destiny of Jesus Christ. Ephesians 1:5.
 - e. We share the heritage of Christ. 1 Peter 1:4-5.
 - f. We share the sanctification of Christ. 1 Corinthians 1:2;
John 17:17-19 and Hebrews 10:14.
 - g. We share the Priesthood of Jesus Christ. I am so sorry that this is not all that important to believers — that we share the Priesthood of Christ. If you were of Jewish background this would be a major issue with you, that you are a priest after the order of Jesus Christ which is above the Priesthood order of the Levites. There is just so much involved in your sharing the Priesthood of Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 2:4-9.
 - h. Christ is the Son of God and being in Christ means we share His Sonship.
 - i. Christ is King and therefore we share His kingdom.
2 Peter 1:11.
12. Many aspects of our lives today here on earth are from our position in Christ.
- a. Our Christian liberty is founded on our being in Christ.
Galatians chapter 2.
 - b. Blessings in time are not dependent on our performance but are dependent upon our position in Christ. Ephesians 1:3.
13. We are identified with Jesus Christ in His death. Colossians 2:12.

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14. We are identified with Christ in His Resurrection.
Colossians 2:12.

Being identified with Jesus Christ in His death means that in our daily lives we do not have to be under the power and control of our Inherited Sin Nature...dead to us. Every time we sin, we resurrect this dead sin nature.

Being identified with Jesus Christ in His Resurrection defines our Spiritual life, Spiritual freedom, and Spiritual liberty!

15. Positional Truth is not known experientially, it is known only through the Word of God.
16. And never forget, all these blessings were prepared by God in Eternity Past and were obtained in total at the moment of salvation.

Now let us drill down to some of the benefits. As we do , please keep in mind two things. Faith continues to be the modus operandi of the believer throughout history. While Position in Christ with the Law of Christ comes with additional assets, it also comes with additional challenges and responsibilities. We are to use these assets to defend ourselves from our sin nature, the cosmos diabolicus and the demonic forces. As said, we are in the intensified stage of the Angelic Conflict.

1. Eternal Life

When we enter into union with Christ we enter the life of Christ. Jesus Christ has eternal life; we share His life — 1John 5:11,12.

1 John 5:11 And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

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1 John 5:12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

It is interesting that we normally associate “in Christ” with Pauline vocabulary. Yet, here in 1 John we find an equivalent term, “in His Son.”

We know from various passages that Old Testament believers have eternal life. For instance, a reading of Luke 16:19-31 shows that there is life after death for Old Testament believers. It also shows that those who are not saved will reside in Torments until being moved to the Lake of Fire. We also know from several passages that there is a resurrection for Old Testament believers.

But our eternal life is “in His Son.” It is different. The resurrection of Old Testament believers and New Testament believers are at different times.

This raises questions to which I do not have answers. Will believers from the Christian dispensation be different from Old Testament believers in eternity? Like angelic beings which have differences (Seraphim, Cherubim, Archangels, etc.)? We know that in our resurrection bodies we will reign with Jesus on Earth. We are not under the New Covenant. That covenant was made with Jews of the House of Israel and the House of Judah. But we will be ministers of it under the reign of king Jesus Christ. We are different.

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2. God's Righteousness

We share His righteousness — 2 Corinthians 5:21.

2 Corinthians 5:21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

We know from previous study that there is a barrier between man and God. Jesus was judged for the sins of the world. But eternal life and God's righteousness are needed to have eternal fellowship with God. For the Christian, these are "imputed" at the point of faith in Christ. And for the Christian these are "in Christ."

Righteousness of God. This is one of the two essential elements for salvation. Jesus died spiritually on the cross during the judgment for all sins. But life and righteousness, God's righteousness, are received as a result of faith on Jesus. The Christian receives this righteousness of God "in Christ."

But, we know that Old Testament believers also received God's righteousness. Paul points to Genesis 15:6 where Abraham believed and it was imputed to him for righteousness.

God's righteousness is absolute. You either have it or you don't. You are either saved or you are not. So I see no difference in the righteousness that we received and that of the Old Testament believer. Only ours is "in Christ."

3. Election & Destiny.

I am not going to address this. At this point I would probably introduce some confusion. So I'll skip it for now.

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4. Heritage of Christ.

The heritage/inheritance of Christ is a longer doctrine. If we have time, we can look at information from Dr. Dean.

<https://deanbibleministries.org/dbmfiles/slides/2010-Romans-087b.pdf>

Romans 8:16,17

Romans 8:16 The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,

Romans 8:17 and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.

Sometimes it is called the inheritance of Christ.

5. Sanctification

1 Corinthians 1:2,30; John 17:17-19 and Hebrews 10:14.

1 Corinthians 1:2 To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours:

Sanctified means set apart to. Christians have been set apart from others by being “in Christ.” We are dedicated to Christ.

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6. Sonship

Here is another doctrine that has many points, perhaps for another time. It deals with the relationship of the Son of God to the Father. Since we are “in Christ,” in other words “in the Son” we have a relationship as children to God the Father. So when we pray, we pray to “the Father.”

https://www.springvalleybiblechurch.org/Audio/Ephesians/notes/2020-05-03Sunday_Morning.pdf

7. King/Royalty

The believer is royalty. In particular, the believer is a royal priest. Royalty. 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; 1 Peter 2:2,3; 1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 1:6

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

1 Peter 2:10 for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

From Kenneth Wuest:

“The word “royal” is the translation of the Greek word for “king.” The Levitical priesthood were only priests. Believers in this dispensation are king-priests, associated with the Lord Jesus who is a priest after the order

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of Melchisedec, a king-priest. The word “nation” is the translation of a Greek word meaning “a multitude of people of the same nature.”³

Royalty is associated with a king. In this case, the king is Jesus Christ. It refers to a ruler over a nation. Indeed, Peter says “a royal priesthood, a nation...” The implication is that believers from the Church Age will be rulers subordinate to Jesus Christ the king. That happens in the Millennium.

The believer is also a priest.

Thomas Constable comments on 1 Peter 2:9

“All the figures of the church that Peter chose here ("chosen people," "royal priesthood," "holy nation," "people for God's own possession") originally referred to Israel (cf. Exod. 19:5-6; Deut. 4:20; 7:6; 14:2; Isa. 43:20). However, with Israel's rejection of Jesus Christ, God created a new body of people through whom He now seeks to accomplish the same purposes that He formerly sought to achieve through Israel—but by different means. This verse, which at first might seem to equate the church and Israel, on careful examination shows as many differences between these groups as similarities.”⁴

Exodus 19:5 Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine;

Exodus 19:6 and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the

3 Kenneth Samuel Wuest (1955). Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament; for the English reader. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans. First Peter in the Greek New Testament. 56

4 <https://soniclight.com/tcon/notes/pdf/1peter.pdf> 2025 edition. page 44

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**words that you shall speak to the sons of
Israel.”**

“God's purpose for Israel was that she be a nation of priests (Exod. 19:6) who would stand between God and the rest of humanity representing people before God and God before people. However God withdrew this blessing from the whole nation, because of the Israelites' apostasy with the golden calf, and He gave it to the faithful tribe of Levi instead (Num. 3:12-13, 45; 8:14; cf. Exod. 13:2; 32:25-29). In contrast, every individual Christian is a priest before God. Christians function as priests to the extent that we worship, intercede, and minister (v. 5; Rev. 1:6). There is no separate priestly class in the church as there was in Israel.⁵”

⁵ <https://soniclight.com/tcon/notes/pdf/1peter.pdf> 2025 edition. page 45