



God's Resources for Life and Healing

Part 2: Our Position in Christ: Victory over Darkness

"And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church."
(Eph. 1:22; NASB)

As we are exploring the all-sufficient resources that God provides us with for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3), including our emotional, psychological, and spiritual health, we are looking first at our position in Christ and the treasures that God gives us immediately upon entering His family. These include: 1) *the peace of knowing we belong eternally to the kingdom of heaven* (John 3:16; 1 John 5:13); 2) *the potential for the highest quality of life possible on earth* (John 10:10b; Ps. 16:11); 3) *total freedom from the burden of guilt* (Ps. 32:1-2; 51:7-9; 103:12; Isa. 1:18; Rom. 8:33-34); 4) *the potential to be transformed into the image of Christ* (Gen. 1:27; Rom. 8:29; 1 Cor. 15:49; 2 Cor. 3:18); and 5) *shared sonship with Jesus Christ Himself* (John 1:12; Gal. 4:4-7; Eph. 1:5; 1 John 3:1), which gives us a) *a perfect source of unconditional love* (John 17:23; 1 John 3:1), and b) *the assurance of receiving the things God knows are good for us* (Ps. 37:4; Matt. 6:25-33; 7:11; Phil. 4:19).

In addition to these, our position in Christ also gives us 6) *spiritual victory over the realm of darkness*. On the Cross, when Jesus took on Himself the sins of all mankind, this included all the spiritual accouterments accompanying them. In other words, for the last three hours of His life He bore the worst spiritual assault that any human has ever endured. Immediately upon His death, however, He triumphantly threw off all these evil beings and turned the shame of the Cross back onto them (Col. 2:15). Through His ultimate sacrifice, He not only paid the full penalty for man's sins, but He redeemed all who would believe in Him from the dominion Satan had gained over them through his victory in the Garden of Eden and transferred them into the Kingdom of God (Gen. 2:16-17; Col. 1:13-14).

By rising victoriously from the grave, He also destroyed the power of death held by Satan (Heb. 2:14-15). He then ascended to heaven, where He took His place at God the Father's right hand with the full hierarchy of the cosmic realm put in subjection to Him (Luke 22:69; Eph. 1:19-22; 1 Pet. 3:21-22). While His having authority over this realm was not new (Mat. 8:28-32; 9:32-34; 12:22; 17:14-18, etc.), the role He was then given as Head of the Church made this authority available to the entire Body, which He actually fills with Himself. We now have a) *the availability of Christ's authority over the evil spiritual realm residing in us* (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 2:9-10). This means we can use Jesus' name to command the obedience of demons (Luke 10:17; Acts 16:18) and request Jesus Himself to exercise His authority over higher-level beings affecting our lives (Jude 9).

In addition to this profound internal union with Christ and His authority, God seats every believer with Christ in the heavenlies (Eph. 2:6). Within the entire spiritual realm we could not have a closer place of identification with the Victor! While this identification is an automatic spiritual reality, we have the opportunity to affirm our identification with the acts that brought Christ's victory over both death and darkness in a tangible way through our participation in the sacraments of holy communion (1 Cor. 10:16; 11:26) and baptism (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12).

While Satan no longer holds dominion over us, he still has the ability to affect our lives. In fact, he and his cohorts are constantly working to deceive and derail us from the abundant and fruitful life God intends for us in His Kingdom (Eph. 6:12; 1 Peter 5:8). Legal rights of attachment can still be established if we yield to the temptations of darkness, have unconfessed generational or personal sin in our lives, become entrenched in the world system, participate in occult activities, or make outright commitments to the realm of darkness.

Even when this occurs, however, if we are willing to confess and repent of the sin providing the legal ground, b) *Christ serves as our Advocate before the Father* (1 John 2:1). He will immediately forgive the sin, cancel the legal grounds, and sever any connections to darkness. When He justly takes up our cause, no entity can succeed in bringing a charge against us (Rom. 8:33-34; 1 John 1:9).