

Our Position In Christ

Ephesians 2:4–9 (KJV)

⁴ But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

⁵ even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened *us* together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

⁶ and hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus:

⁷ that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in *his* kindness towards us through Christ Jesus.

⁸ For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:

⁹ not of works, lest any *man* should boast.

In our study, we will be looking at our position, as believers, in Christ. As believers, scripture calls us the body of Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:27 (KJV)

²⁷ Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

Every one of us who believes in Jesus has been placed in the body of Christ, for we are "members in particular" by God. God, who is rich in mercy and possess great love, shows His love for us by gathering us together in Christ.

Darrell Bock, a professor at the Dallas Theological Seminary, brings out an essential point in his commentary on Ephesians, "Ephesians: An Introduction and Commentary." In his analysis, he brings up that the use of the underlying Greek word for "quickened us together" in verses 5 and 6 only occurs in these verses and Colossians 2:13. It is a prefix attached to "quickened" that indicates it is "together." That's a total of 4 occurrences of one word in all of the New Testament.

Colossians 2:13 (KJV)

¹³ And you, being dead in *your* sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

No where else is the word together used like this in the New Testament. It is of particular significance. Not only does it show there is no difference between Gentile or Jew but shows we are all made alive together. Because of our connection to Christ, we share all the same blessings. We all share the same benefits in and with Christ.

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Because God has placed Jesus above all principalities and powers, we are also above all principalities and powers. We all share everything that God has given to Jesus because of the obedience of Jesus. Remember this fact as we continue in our study through verses 8 and 9!

From Death To Life By God With Grace

As we are seeing, because God is merciful and greatly loves us, He has provided us eternal life in Christ, even though we were dead in our sins. Who else would do something like this? Paul explains it this way in his letter to the Romans.

Romans 5:6–8 (KJV)

⁶ For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

⁷ For scarcely for a righteous *man* will one die: yet peradventure for a good *man* some would even dare to die.

⁸ But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

It is because of God that we will be saved and receive eternal life in Christ. How would it be possible for us to save ourselves? How can we who are dead, all of a sudden, give ourselves eternal life? It is impossible, but yet the greatest majority of people on this earth, even in this so-called period of enlightenment, do not believe Jesus has provided the only way for salvation!

As we have read in verse 5 and will see again in verse 8, we find it is grace that saves. So, what is this grace? A popular definition says grace is undeserved favor. It's a good definition because it speaks of favor that is not deserved. We deserve death, but God is providing us eternal life. I think Ephesians 2:4 provides an excellent definition of grace. Paul provides this and then shows us this idea in verse 5. Here is verse 4 again.

Ephesians 2:4 (KJV)

⁴ But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

God is rich in mercy and has great love for us, so He loved us enough to provide the payment for our sins; death on the Cross. Paul reminds us in his letter to the Romans that the cost of sin is death. He also, in that same verse, tells us of God's love, proved by grace, in giving us eternal life, without us having to pay the price. Someone must pay the price, but it wasn't us, it was God.

Romans 6:23 (KJV)

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²³ For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

So we can see that grace, while it is undeserved favor, has the components of mercy and love associated with it. Mercy relieves us of receiving the wage of sin, and love has God earning that wage.

The Gift

Most of the time, when we think of the gift of God, we think of eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord, as we just read in Romans 6:23. But is that the extent of this gift? A careful reading of our study of Ephesians shows there is more to the gift. It begins with eternal life, but then it just keeps getting better!

Ephesians 2:6 (KJV)

⁶ and hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus:

In Ephesians 2:6, we are presented with much more from this gift given to us by God. I want to add we did not pay for this gift by God. Grace provided it to us. If we did not pay for it, it is free. It is free for us. So we need to remember this is a gift, freely given to us by God. He paid for it, not us! It should just make sense that a gift is free, but in today's corrupted world, we can't assume people understand this. So, this free gift of eternal life, also includes us being raised up together and made to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

I spoke earlier about this word "together" as only being used here a total of 4 times. In this section of Ephesians and Colossians 2:13. So, who is being spoken of in this word "together"?

As we think about the use of "together," we find a connection between us as the Body of Christ, Jesus the head of the Body of Christ, and God the Father who orchestrates it all. Together ties the Father, Jesus and us together, if you will. It involves the Father because Jesus came to earth to pay the price for our sin, which was the will of the Father. Think of what Jesus said in the Gospel of John.

John 5:30 (KJV)

³⁰ I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

So, it was the Father who sent Jesus to pay the price of our sin and to reconcile us to Himself.

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I believe we are all very much aware of John 3:16.

John 3:16 (KJV)

¹⁶ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

It was the will of the Father to have Jesus pay the price for our sin, and it pleased Him to have Jesus pay this price. Let's read what the prophet Isaiah said.

Isaiah 53:10 (KJV)

¹⁰ Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief: When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, He shall see *his* seed, he shall prolong *his* days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

Read Isaiah 53 and see the price paid for us; see the cost of the grace God paid for us.

So, the Father made it so we could be reconciled back to Him through His Son, Jesus. Because Jesus was obedient through the entire process, he was made head of the body, which is the Church.

Now we, as believers, have been raised up together and seated in heavenly places in Christ by the Father. He has raised us up and seated us with Christ. As members of the church, or the Body of Christ, we are literally connected with Christ. As a result of this, we, as the Body of Christ, share in the same power and glory that Jesus has been given. Consider what Paul says to the Romans,

Romans 8:37 (KJV)

³⁷ Nay, in all these *things* we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

Because of our position in Christ, by the will of the Father and worked out by the obedience of Jesus, we are more than conquerors. Jesus has put all things under his feet. Through Christ, we have access to all that Jesus has as supplied by the Father. There is no higher power than God, and we share in that power. Nothing can gain mastery over God, and therefore, because we are connected with God, nothing can gain mastery over us. As long as we remain aligned with Christ, there is nothing that can overcome us.

We see then this gift of eternal life is made even better by the fact that it also includes being lifted up together and made to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. This is an amazing gift given to us, a depraved group of constantly sinning people who turned

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against the God who loves us enough to pay the price of that sin. But wait, there's more!

Ephesians 2:7 (KJV)

⁷ that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in *his* kindness towards us through Christ Jesus.

God has given us all this, but there will be more to come. In the ages to come means future blessings that will continue to show the exceeding riches of his grace in the kindness, he shows us through Christ Jesus.

Our blessing at this present time is more than we can imagine. We have not come close to tapping into the power God has given us in Christ Jesus. If we read the Gospel and see all that Jesus did as a man, we should be making certain connections in our minds. If we are connected to the Father by Jesus, because God has raised us up together with and in Christ, then the things that Jesus did, except paying for our sins, we ought to be able to do. I made the exception of paying for our sins because one, Jesus already did that, and we as the sinners could not pay for our sins. We only have this power now because of what Jesus has already done.

So, can we live a sin-free life as a believer? We can if we choose to do so. Let's look for a moment at what Paul wrote to the Romans.

Romans 7:17–25 (KJV)

¹⁷ Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

¹⁸ For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good *thing*: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not.

¹⁹ For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

²⁰ Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

²¹ I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

²² For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

²³ but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

²⁴ O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

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²⁵ I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

It is no longer I that sin because, as a member of the Body of Christ, I desire to do the will of the Father, but my flesh wills to do sin. I am my soul and spirit. Eternal life will not include this corrupted flesh. God will provide me with a new, immortal, incorruptible body, so this fleshly body will no longer be around. We, as members of the Body of Christ, will, at some point, enjoy unknown blessings from the Father that we are unable to even fathom in this present age.

We know by faith that God's mercy and love, his grace, last forever; it never ceases. As such, we serve a wonderful God who loved us first, who loved us and saved us even before we knew that we needed salvation! As a believer, we have more than we can imagine, and it only gets better as we move from age to age. I find myself struggling to come up with words to describe the vastness of His grace and the love and mercy He has shown us, so I will end my statements now and allow God's wisdom to fill our hearts as we contemplate all that He is.