

Raised and Seated Together' Ephesians 2.

by John Nelson Darby

Through faith, we are saved and brought into Christ, where we are seated in heavenly places, and we live in a Christian state or place, waiting for Christ's return.

Scripture: Ephesians 2:4

Topics: "Identity in Christ", "Grace and Redemption"

Description

John Nelson Darby emphasizes in his sermon 'Raised and Seated Together' that through Christ's death and resurrection, believers are raised and seated in heavenly places with Him. He contrasts the responsibility of the first Adam with the redemptive purpose of the last Adam, highlighting that God predestined us for adoption and conformity to Christ's image. Darby explains that while we were once dead in sins, God's rich mercy has quickened us together with Christ, allowing us to share in His glory. He stresses the importance of understanding our identity in Christ and living out our faith as a reflection of His grace. Ultimately, the sermon calls believers to recognize their position in Christ and to manifest His life in their daily actions.

Transcript

There are two subjects in this chapter, one of which I have specially in view. The first is that God has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Still He has a habitation down here through the Spirit, which is the second thing. There is a house built in which God through the Holy Ghost dwells down here. It is the first part I have on my mind.

There are two great points in God's ways and dealings with man; one is the responsibility of the first Adam, and the second is His purpose in the last Adam. God purposes certain things about us. We are predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, and, again, predestinated unto the adoption of children.

God had in view certain things, which He was going to accomplish in the second Adam. It was all before the foundation of the world, and the cross is the meeting-place of these two things. The cross proved that we were ruined and lost, and it also laid the foundation for putting us into the same glory as the Son of God. The epistle to the Romans takes up the first of these points, except two or three verses at the end of chapter viii., while that to the Ephesians is entirely taken up with the second. It looks at sinners first; but it looks at them in an entirely different way to Romans. It is a different thing to look at me as a sinner and responsible for my sins, with Christ Himself answering for them, to God putting me into the same glory as

His Son. This last is treated of in Ephesians. We get also a different dealing with the condition of man. In Romans we are looked at as alive in sins, and there is a long account of the wickedness of Jews and Gentiles, and the whole world is proved to be guilty before God, and then it deals with our condition and state. The second part of Romans takes up the tree as being bad, not only the fruit it produces. The cross has met all that. Not only has He died for my sins, but I died with Christ, for faith. Death is the only end of the flesh or the evil nature. Romans takes up man as a sinner; first, as to his conduct, and secondly as to his state; for one, justification, and for the other, deliverance, and that is by death. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." It has been condemned in the cross of the Lord Jesus, and reckoning myself dead is a positive gain. Colossians treats of both. I reckon myself dead now, because Christ has died. It is the same figure as the Jordan, and the Red Sea, too, in a certain aspect.

When I come to Ephesians I am looked at as dead in sins, not alive in them. There is nothing to do with responsibility or justification - it is a new creation. Before the death of Christ it was God not merely saying that man was a sinner, but there were dealings of God with man - the flood, the law, the prophets, and lastly His Son; and the end of it was, not that God turned man out of Paradise, but that man turned the Son of God out of this world. Man is lost; but Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost. That is what Christianity came in with. The world is thinking of meeting the day of judgment, but I do not think of that, for I am a poor lost sinner, and I get salvation. When people want to make something of man, it is important to get hold of this - what the testimony of the word of God is. We often find foundations insecurely laid in a man's soul, and that comes from the want of a thorough conviction of sin. They have no sense of the impossibility of God and sin coming together.

Well, God had gone all through this process, and at last said, "I have one Son, I will send Him." But when He came they said, "This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours." It was in the end of the world that He appeared - in the consummation of the ages. We are not come to the end of the world yet, but God has tested and tried man thoroughly and completely, and as the Lord Jesus says, "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out." It is not yet executed, but God has tested man thoroughly. The thing in which the enmity of man's heart was manifested against God was the very thing in which God wrought the redemption which saves a man. The cross was the meeting-point of the sin of man with the perfect love of God. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The world said, "We will not have God at any terms," and they cast Him out and slew Him. That is what we all are. Man has to find out what he has done and what he is.

When that blessed and glorious work was done upon the cross, then God could bring out all His purposes and thoughts, not merely the church, but if you look at 2 Timothy i. 9, it is perfectly stated there. "Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began." God brought in the first Adam and tested him, and when all that was gone through, and Christ was rejected and died, God was glorified in that, and the foundation was laid for bringing man into glory; and then it comes out that the purpose was before the foundation of the world - so also in Titus. The soul goes through it individually, but we have the whole historical truth of it at the death of Christ. What I learn now is, that it is not whether I can meet the day of judgment, but that I am lost already. I prefer any vanity of dress or money to Christ. The world we live in has rejected God come in grace.

Then I come to the second point, what the purpose of God about us is - that we should be in the same glory as His Son. I was "alive" in sins if I look at my side of it, but "dead" in my sins if I look towards God. In this epistle, where it is "dead in sins" (I speak now of the operation that brings us into a new condition), Christ is looked at as dead. "What is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places." Here Christ is looked at as a man, in order to bring us with Him according to the mighty power which God wrought in Christ. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;" the blessed truth of that is, that where we were lying in sin and disobedience, Christ came in love and obedience, so He gives Himself up to death where I was lying, having put away my sins. Well, then, God takes this One who had gone down into this place for us, and raises Him from the dead and sets Him in the glory of God. We do not see ourselves yet gathered to Him in the glory, "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour." And now that very same power has wrought in bringing us into His place, by faith. Christ was actually dead, and I was dead in my sins, and God comes and raises us both up together. How came He to be down there in death? Ah! He came there about my sins. In virtue of what Christ has done, God takes a man that was dead in his sins, and puts him in Christ - in the very same place where Christ is, and by the same power that raised up Christ from the dead.

We "were by nature the children of wrath, even as others" - that is the condition we were all in, Jews and Gentiles. We naturally belonged to it Then he goes on, "But God, who is rich in mercy," etc. I see this poor, wretched child of wrath, and I find God above all this, and rich in mercy. I am taken from myself and cast upon God's doings, and that is where we get real peace. The prodigal son thought he would say to his father, "Make me as one of thy hired servants;" but he had not met his father then, for if he had, he would have known how his father would have treated him. It was all showing what the father was for the son: he must have the best robe, and the shoes, and the ring. The whole condition of the son was the effect of what the father was for him.

When I was by nature a child of wrath, He "hath quickened us together with Christ." Christ having done what made it righteous for God to do it, God comes and takes us up there, "And hath raised us up together and hath made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." He put Christ as a man at the right hand of God, and by the same power He puts me into Christ. My place now is the effect of the sovereign goodness and mercy of God, who took me when I was dead in trespasses and sins, and put me right into Christ where He is - wonderful place surely! Then the angels say, "Well, that is grace. That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Jesus Christ" Whether it is the thief upon the cross, Mary Magdalene, or one of us, we are put in the same place as He is. We are not in the heavenly places with Christ yet, but we are in Christ. The power that raised Christ, from death, into the glory of God, has put me in Christ in the same place.

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." You get the works afterwards. "We are his workmanship, created in Jesus Christ unto good works." Created in Christ Jesus, not in Adam now, I am created over again. The same power that wrought to put Christ into glory, has now wrought to put me into Christ. The Holy Ghost dwelling in me, gives me the knowledge that I am in Christ. God dwelling with us never was true of man, except in virtue of redemption - it never was true of Adam or Abraham, but the instant that Israel was redeemed out of Egypt, then He dwelt among them - there by the cloud over the tabernacle. Now in virtue of redemption God can come and dwell. The Christian is sitting in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and individually he is

the temple of the Holy Ghost. Being livingly united to Christ by the Holy Ghost, gives me the knowledge that I am in heavenly places in Christ, and therefore our citizenship is in heaven. Christ as Son of man has perfectly glorified God; and what is the just reward of glorifying God? That He is set at the right hand of God. We "rejoice in the hope of the glory of God;" what could make poor worms such as we are, think of that? It is because of what Christ has done. Just as we were like the first Adam, so shall we be like Christ in glory. He became a man on purpose to bring us, through His death, into the same glory with Himself.

Do you believe that, beloved friends, as regards yourselves? Do you believe that God is going to show to angels, in the ages to come, the riches of His grace in the place He has given you? It is important for us to see that, as regards title to the place and having the Holy Ghost who gives us the knowledge of being in Christ, it is a present thing. The glory is not a present thing, but we are to know that we are in Christ, and that as He is, so are we in this world, That is our place with God, so that we have boldness for the day of judgment, delight in the day of Christ. I could not dream of works of mine to get there - of my works giving me a place in the glory of God! Man is in the glory of God in virtue of what He has done who has entered as my forerunner. We are called there in justice to the worth of Christ's work.

Now see where the works are; they come in as the fruits of this. God has works which fit this place. "Good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." The works are ordained as much as the place. What does the apostle say when he exhorts them? "Be ye therefore followers of God as clear children." You are made partakers of the divine nature, and now go and walk in the way suited to that. Do not let me see anything but Christ in you. Christ appears in the presence of God for us, so that there is perfect acceptance for us according to the value of His work, and now you appear before the world for Christ. I am the epistle of Christ known and read of all men - entire association with Christ, in the power of the Holy Ghost. It is not that we have to get a place, but, as put into that place, my business is to show forth Christ in everything. "Whether therefore ye eat or drink or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." If we have no oil in our vessels it will not do to meet Him. There is nothing more important than the thought of the expectation of the Lord's coming; it is the character of the Christian. Are you really waiting for Christ, as men that wait for their lord? It is the condition I am to be found in. How far can we really say, I know my place in Christ, who is a Man in the glory of God, and therefore I am waiting for Him to come and take me actually there?

Supposing I am in heavenly places in Christ, then our conversation is in heaven, earthly objects are gone. It is where we are set as God's workmanship. He has set us there in His sovereign grace, and what I most earnestly desire is, that our hearts should have the consciousness of it, and, in having this purpose of God set before us, that we should be living in a Christian state or place. The place that God has given us is a place in Christ Himself. And now the life of Jesus is to be manifested in our bodies.

It is important that we should get hold of what is Christianity, in these perilous times. "As the truth is in Jesus," is, that I have done with Adam, and am in Christ. I have put off the old man and put on the new. Man tries to improve the old, it cannot be done. You cannot set about and make the old man do for God, because God has supplanted him. He has judged the old man at the cross, and He has brought in Christ.

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