

The Four Fold Risenness of the Christian - Part 3

by Tim Conway

Tim Conway's sermon emphasizes the believer's current identity as seated with Christ in the heavenly places, challenging misconceptions about depravity and future hope.

Duration: 1:06:59

Scripture: Ephesians 1:19, Ephesians 2:6

Topics: "Spiritual Victory", "Heavenly Reign"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the powerful reality of being seated together with Christ in the heavenly places, highlighting the present victory and authority believers have in Christ. It challenges the common mindset of defeat and corruption, urging Christians to live in the truth of their exalted position and reign with Christ now, not just in the future. The sermon encourages believers to approach life, sin, the world, and spiritual battles from the vantage point of triumph and dominion, drawing near to God with confidence and seeking heavenly things where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

Transcript

Let's turn in our Bibles to Ephesians 2. Verse 6, God is the subject. Paul gave us the subject back in the beginning of verse 4. God seeded us. Remember, he's speaking to those, to the saints who are in Ephesus.

Likewise, I'm speaking to the saints who are on the east side of San Antonio gathered within these walls. God seeded us. That's the us.

It's not universal. It's the saints. God seeded us with Him.

God seeded us together with Christ in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. That's what I want to deal with today. This series, How Alive is Alive.

This is life. This is being alive. That's the question.

How alive? The four-fold risen-ness of the Christian. This is part 3. We've dealt with being made alive together with Christ, raised up together with Christ. Today, seeded together with Christ.

Next week, it's going to be verse 7. These first three are about what God has already done for us. Next week is going to be what is yet future for the Christian. So, what we've come to now is the very pinnacle of what God has already done for the believer.

The Apostle is giving us this great reality, this great statement about who we are as Christians. And we need to know. Because we don't always know.

You would think we would know because it's true of us if we're Christians. But isn't it amazing how often the Scriptures deal with us about very realities that we need to be told are real because we don't really get it that it's real. And the thing is that being told that which we have a difficult time comprehending, we're being told that so that our faith might latch onto it, actually believe it, because there's something to that in the Christian life.

There's something about reckoning yourself to be what you really are that will help you to be what you are. And to live up to what you are. And to strive and live in that reality of what we are.

Brethren, we're looking at an almost unbelievable truth. You think about it. Christian, you are seated with Christ in the heavenly places.

We can almost subliminally read this and make it future. Oh, I see. We're going to be seated with Christ.

It's like, have you ever talked to somebody or you watch a conversation where somebody is being told something and they keep responding back with an answer that's wrong? And it's like, why are they not getting it? It's because they can't hear it. It's amazing to me. I really don't think people can hear this.

And listen, I'm going to say some things today and I know I'm going to be misunderstood. I'll just tell you right up front, I am going to be misunderstood about some of the things I say to you. But I am convinced, especially in reformed circles, we can't hear this.

In fact, we have been so programmed by so much of the reformed teaching not to be able to hear this, that I'm going to be misunderstood. But if you will try to hear me, if you will try to hear what I'm saying, brethren, this says you already are seated with Christ in the heavenly places. This is not talking about something that's going to happen in the future.

He is talking about that which is a reality already if you have been made alive. In the future, God will grant us to sit with Christ upon His throne. Yes, that's true, but that's not the truth here.

Don't read it that way. No, no, no, no, no. The Apostle does not use his verbs indiscriminately.

This is a tense in the Greek that is equivalent to our past tense in the English. Period. There is no textual issue here.

There is no debate. Nobody debates that this is past tense. It's already been done.

And we can say yes. Well, yes, we see that there. Of course.

Seated. That's past. E.D. Right? You put an E.D. on the end of a verb because it's past.

Yes, we can say it, but I'm telling you, brethren, you start going and looking at the commentaries, it is amazing. They all want to look to the future. All want to look to the future.

Why? Because they are so programmed to do that. It's like you can't even hear it. Well, no, Paul just said that's past tense.

Well, yes, I know that, but this is about the future. No, no. He said it's past tense.

Yes, but let's talk about the future. It's amazing. There was no slip of the pen here.

None. You are already in the same realm that Christ is, and you have the same posture that He has. What's the realm? Heavenly places.

What's the posture? Sitting. What's the time? Past tense. Lay it down, brethren.

That's the truth. This is the sort of thing we need to repeat to ourselves. Brethren, I can remember when I was preaching through Romans.

I got to Romans 6. Verse 2, Christian, you have died to sin. Verse 11, reckon. Or you need to consider yourselves dead to sin, alive to God.

When I got there, I said church. I was convinced. Again, I think it's part of the influence of the reformed circles.

There is so much that's positive about the influence of the reformed movement and the reformers. Don't get me wrong there. But there is an influence concerning the depravity and the corruption of Christians that is emphasized in the reformed movement that I just do not believe squares with Scripture.

And you can hear it so often and so regularly that you can't even process certain truths. I said to the church, because I knew about the influence, and I said, brethren, brethren, I want you to say this out loud. I am dead to sin.

And I wanted them to really say it. And I think this is the same kind of truth. I think we need to say this.

We need to repeat this to ourselves. Not in the future, at some point when Christ returns, He's going to take me with Him and sit me on His throne. That's not it.

We need to say it like Paul says it. We need to say, I am seated together with Christ in the heavenly places. Why? Why should we say that? Because it's an almost incomprehensible concept if we don't actually verbalize it.

Brethren, God's children have a hard time believing certain things. And here's what happens. When you start saying something to yourself, when you start reciting something to yourself, you have to start to grapple with the reality of it.

You can just write it off. But say that. Say it to yourself.

If you're a Christian. If you're not a Christian, this isn't true of you. But if you have been made alive together with Christ, bank on it.

This is true past tense. You are seated together with Jesus Christ in the heavenly places. What God has done in our salvation is so high and lofty.

We often have a very difficult time comprehending just how glorious all of this is. Now listen, brethren, the reformed movement tends to put an emphasis in certain places. And there's reasons why they do it.

There's a history. When I first got saved, I heard regularly Jeremiah 17.9 quoted as though it was a truth that pertained to Christians. Anybody know what Jeremiah 17.9 says? It's, the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately sick, the ESV says, desperately wicked.

Who can understand it? I heard that text repeatedly applied to Christians. And isn't it interesting when you go to Jeremiah, what do we find? We find that a new covenant is given within the very identifying characteristics of the new covenant. You don't find that under the new covenant, God's people have a desperately wicked heart.

What do you find is true about the heart under the new covenant? We have a new heart. God writes His law on our heart. He puts His Spirit within us.

He causes us to keep His statutes. You find something, we all know Him. There's nothing about this desperately wicked.

I heard this applied. Now listen to me. If you basically do a little bit of study, here's what you'll find.

The early Greek church fathers all believed Paul in Romans 7 was man under the law. Augustine believed that in the beginning too, but you know what happened? He had an ax to grind with Pelagius. Now Pelagius with all of his errors and heresy, and I'm not standing behind what he believed at all, but you know what he saw? He saw so much immorality.

And you know what happened? Constantine took Christianity and made it state religion. You know what happens as soon as you do that? You defile Christianity. Suddenly, it's a state religion and there's corruption and immorality everywhere.

And you know what? Pelagius saw that. And he pointed it out. Well, Augustine to come along and help define that and explain that changed his position to counter Pelagius and said, well, okay, I'm changing my mind.

Paul's not under the law there. Paul's actually a Christian there. And that helps explain why there's so much immorality and corruption in Christianity.

And here's the thing. The reformers. Brother Kevin sent me a quote from Conrad Murrell.

I'm going to loosely paraphrase this. But Murrell said this, I am more and more confident that the reformers and their successors in the Puritans went astray on the matter of the extent of depravity. And he said this, they had two axes to grind.

Augustine had one with Pelagius, but now he's talking about the reformers and the Puritans. Here's what they had. On the one hand, Catholicism.

And see, the reformers so wanted to emphasize their doctrine of justification. A good doctrine. Right doctrine.

Right emphasis. But see, the Catholics, they wanted to talk about infused righteousness. Not imputed, but infused.

They actually wanted to produce works. Now, they thought they were saved by them, but they saw the importance. And the reformers downplayed that with their doctrine of justification, which is a good doctrine.

On the other hand, there were the Anabaptists. And the reformers are confronted by the Anabaptists, and you know what they wanted? They wanted a regenerate church membership. Again, the reformers are playing it down because they have state religion too.

Just like Constantine back in the beginning. And so, here's the Anabaptists, and they're saying we want a pure church. Well, the reformers and Puritans have all these lost people, lost children, all sorts of lost people in the church.

And so, you see, both with Catholicism and with the Anabaptists, the reformers and their successors, the Puritans, are put in a place where really emphasizing the corruption and the depravity of Christians became necessary. And you know what? We are still influenced by their emphasis now. Listen to what Merle says.

Merle said, this caused the reformers to make much more of corruption and depravity in the believer himself than the Scriptures do. At any rate, I am having a joyful time ridding myself of being chained to the old Puritan mindset for many years and going back to letting the Bible say what it actually says. It also seems this is powerfully liberating to the saints of God.

I know the Puritans were great souls, but they were only men. And you know, I think some reformers have a problem hearing that. They were only men.

They're not God. And the writings of the Puritans are not equal to Scripture. Oh, some of the Puritans, their writings are glorious.

And I commend them. I think it would be helpful in so many ways, but I think he's dead on here. They were only men.

Dealing with the problems of their times that they faced. We're thankful for them. And so am I. But must not let them rewrite the Bible for us.

Brethren, we need to breathe the free, triumphant air of Scripture. Texts like this, you are seated together with Christ in the heavenly places. And brethren, you do not want to come along and just say, well, that's theoretical, or that's a legal reality.

Like Craig and I were talking the other night. Forensic. You can just say that about stuff.

Oh, it's forensic. Which means what? Well, there's a legal reality in the courtroom of God somewhere, but it doesn't really have any practical, it doesn't have any experiential impact on my life. You don't want to do that with this.

We're going to look at this more closely in a second. Brethren, you know what you can say as a Christian? You can say what Scripture says. And you can dogmatically, you can repeat it to yourselves.

You can say, I am alive together with Christ. I am raised up together with Christ. I am seated together with Christ.

I am dead to sin. I have died to the law. You can say that.

I have come to Mount Zion and to the city of God and to the New Jerusalem and to innumerable ages and the souls of just men made perfect. And I have come to God the Judge. And I have come to Christ the Mediator of a new covenant.

And I have come to the blood. I already have. That's a reality.

I am presently a citizen of another country, of the heavenly kingdom. You can say those realities about yourself. It is a very triumphant picture in Scripture.

Very triumphant. Seated together with Christ. That's our focus.

So let's look at this one great statement. God seated you together with Christ. I don't think you can even think of a higher statement that could be made.

A more wonderful, more glorious statement concerning the Christian than that. Brethren, can it even possibly get higher than that? As high as the man Jesus Christ has been exalted, Paul says, that's where you are. That is your place.

That is your position. That's where you are already. Not will be.

This is the highest glory. And there's hardly a statement that could be higher. This is our position.

So what does it mean? I mean, that's the issue. What does it mean? Well, here's the thing. Certainly, we're required to walk by faith.

And there's really two issues concerning faith here. On the one hand, there's where you are now. We don't walk by sight.

We walk by faith. There's a believing where you are now. But he ties it together with another fact that we believe by faith.

That's that Christ actually ascended and sat down on His throne. And so basically, I just want to develop a theology of this ascension of Christ to His throne. Let's just see it.

Because, by the way, when it says you're raised together with Christ, the assumption is, you're raised together with Him. You're seated with Him in the heavenly places. The assumption is that He ascended and He sat down and we do it with Him.

So let's look at Him, which took place 2,000 years ago, actually taking His throne. That's what we want to see. So turn in your Bibles to Luke 24.

I'm just going to very quickly move through some verses that show us this reality. We're called to believe something that is true about ourselves and has been since we've been saved. We're called upon to believe something that's true of Christ and has been for 2,000 years.

And Paul ties them together. Where we are now has to do with where he went back then. So where did he go back then? Where he is still.

And now where we are with him. Let's see it. Luke 24.36 I'm just going to kind of jump through here.

But Jesus Himself stood among His disciples. You see the picture. A real day.

A real first day of the week if you wanted to dive into it just like this day. The first day of the week. The day that Jesus Christ has arisen from the dead.

And what happened? His disciples are gathered together and suddenly there is Christ in their midst. He didn't come through the door. There He is.

And what does He say? What words to an anxiety-filled soul and He still speaks them today to His people. Peace. Just be at peace.

They were startled. They were frightened. Verse 39, He says, see My hands and My feet that it is I Myself.

He's burying the wounds. He's bent to the cross. Touch Me and see.

You go to 42, they gave Him a piece of broiled fish. He's showing He's a man and glorified. He's risen now.

I don't know to what degree glorified. He's risen. He certainly didn't have the appearance that He had on the Mount of Transfiguration, but He's alive.

He still bears the wounds. He's eating as a man eats. Verse 44, then He said to them, thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead.

You go to 47, repentance, forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all nations beginning from Jerusalem. 48, you are witnesses of these things. 49, behold, I am sending the promise of My Father.

So you see this. He appears to them. He's telling them about witnesses, about the fact that this Gospel's going to go forward, and then about how He's going to empower the church.

I'm going to send the promise of My Father. I'm going to send the Holy Spirit to you. That's what He said.

And He blessed them. And He parted from them. Verse 51, and was carried up into heaven.

There it is. Carried up into heaven. You don't need to turn to this one, but Mark 16, verse 19 says, so then the Lord Jesus, after He had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God.

Now turn in your Bibles to Acts. Luke writes Acts. Luke wrote Luke.

Luke wrote Acts. It's basically a two-parter. You've got the first part in Luke.

You've got the second part in Acts. And basically what Luke does is in Acts, he picks up where he left off in his Gospel. Namely, with Christ making the promise of the Spirit of God, telling them they're going to be witnesses of Him being taken up.

And you see this here in Acts 1. Notice verse 3. Jesus presented Himself alive to them after His sufferings by many proofs. What were the proofs? Well, He appeared to 900 to 500 people. Remember, He cooked breakfast for them on one occasion.

But many proofs. He presented Himself alive. He proved to them.

He ate. He had them look at the wounds. Many proofs.

Appearing to them during 40 days. So from the time that He was arisen from the dead, He was among His disciples for 40 days. And He spoke to them about the Kingdom of God.

If you jump down to verse 8. And He said to them, you will receive power. You see, this is the promise. When the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea, Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

And when He had said these things as they were looking on, He was lifted up and a cloud took Him out of their sight. So this is it. This is the ascension taken up.

I'll jump over to Acts 2. Now, here's Peter. What has happened is exactly what Jesus promised. What's that? The day of Pentecost was upon them.

The Spirit of God was poured out upon them. Just as Christ said, the promise of the Father. And now, full of the Spirit of God, the disciples break forth onto the streets of Jerusalem in the power of the Spirit.

And what happens? They begin to witness of Jesus Christ. His sufferings. His resurrection.

Just like He said they would be witnesses of Him. And so here in Acts 2, verse 32, this Jesus, God raised up, and of that, we are all witnesses. There it is.

He's witnessing. Being therefore exalted. Notice this.

He's not just raised from the dead. He's exalted at the right hand of God. And having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.

For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, the Lord said to my Lord, sit at My right hand, and I will make Your enemies Your footstool. Now, brethren, let me tell you something. You know where that comes from? It comes from Psalm 110.

Verse 1. That is the most often quoted Old Testament passage in the New Testament. That ought to come with some weight. What? The Lord said to my Lord, sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies a footstool.

Just think about this. Christ sitting. That is the most often referred to Old Testament passage.

Christ sitting down at the right hand of the Father. The Lord said unto my Lord. If you know your Hebrew, in fact, one of the brothers came up this morning and said, you know in the Spanish, it said, Jehovah said to my Lord.

In the original, it's this way. Jehovah said to Adonai, sit at My right hand. Peter defines this for us.

Jehovah is God. It is God the Father. The Adonai is the Lord Jesus Christ.

What Jehovah is saying to this one called Adonai, Adonai. It's a word that means one with authority. One who is in power.

One who reigns. One who rules. One who has possession.

One who is master. Jehovah is saying to Christ the Father, saying to His Son, sit at My right hand. The right hand is a position of honor.

It is the position of rank. But brethren, more than this, to sit, that has significance. Brethren, do you know when you go to the book of Hebrews, the author of Hebrews loves to make a big deal out of the fact that Jesus Christ is sitting at the right hand of the Father.

And you know what's interesting? He also, He's emphasizing the priesthood of Christ. And He likes to talk to you about earthly priests and how they're inferior to Christ. And you know one of the things that He says? They stand daily ministering.

You know what else He says? He says that their offerings never did anything for sin. That's why they kept standing. You don't keep standing when the job's done, and you keep standing as long as there's more of a job to be done.

The reality is, you know what the author of Hebrews says? After having made purification for sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. That's what you do. After having made purification for sins.

Done. Finished. A man sits as a sign that the work that he has been commissioned to do is done.

It means Christ has completed the work and brought it to an end. This is the picture of a king who has returned from battle and been victorious. The battle is won.

He takes His throne of dominion. He sits down. Brethren, this is a posture of victory.

When Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, He sat down at the right hand of God. Jesus endured the cross, despising the shame. Isn't that what the author of Hebrews says? And is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

He did the work. He sat down. See, we're just developing a theology of this whole seating of Christ.

It happened. That's where He is. Seated at the right hand of Majesty on high.

Brethren, do you recognize the Man Jesus Christ? See, this is what the author of Hebrews is arguing for too. His Man. Made for a little while lower than angels.

See, that's representative of all. He was made like us in every respect. You see, He became one of us.

He calls us His brothers in that book. What we have to recognize is the Man. This last Adam.

This One who represents us. Bone of our bone. Think where He is.

He's been exalted to the absolute highest place in the universe. If you can even call that in the universe, it's probably outside the universe. But where is there a higher, more exalted place than at the right hand of the Majesty on high? There is none.

Brethren, you have to recognize, we would not have ever even dreamed this up to have Paul come along and say in the first place, you will be there with Christ. Scripture does speak that way. But for him to come along and say, God has already seated you there.

What is that? There He is. There He sits. But it's not just He's sitting.

It says you sit there until I make all your enemies a footstool for your feet. A footstool. Have you ever read when Joshua went into the land of Canaan and began to defeat the kings? And he called the leaders of Israel.

And he had those kings brought. Before they executed them, he had the men of Israel place their feet on their necks. You ever read that? In David's day and back in the day when Psalm 110 was written? It was common for a king to show that he had conquered another kingdom by bringing the king of that kingdom and placing his foot on the neck of that conquered enemy.

You knew which king was reigning, and you knew which king had been defeated by their position in that whole scene. You know what we are told? We are told in 1 Corinthians 15 that Christ must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. Picture it.

The devil and all of his angels. Brethren, think about what this is saying. Every single defiant human being is going to have their neck under His heel.

Every devil, every one of his angels, every man, woman, and child who remains defiant to Christ, their necks are all headed towards one place. All of them. He is reigning.

He is ruling. Put away this garbage that Jesus Christ is not yet reigning and will not reign until He sets up a kingdom in Jerusalem in the physical Jerusalem over on the other side of the world in the Near East. Don't buy that.

Christ is reigning now. Christ is on His throne now. He is reigning.

He is ruling. His enemies are being subdued. Bank on it.

Count on it. We see Him seated. You know, Peter said it in that day, you can let all the house of Israel know some truth.

What truth was that? Let them know therefore for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ. He is Lord. He reigns.

And every one of His enemies are being subdued before Him. Let there be no question, brethren, for a moment as to who exactly is on the throne of this world. While the devil may be real, he may be strong, he may be influencing this world, but you make no mistake about who is on that throne.

Jesus Christ is on that throne and though He be seated, make no mistake about it, He is still a man of war. And there are pictures that portray that reality just as well. Not the least of which are some of the pictures that you get in the book of Revelation.

People may go wrong on Revelation in all sorts of places, but I'll tell you one place you never want to go wrong is who it is that's on a white horse and goes forth conquering to conquer. That is not the Antichrist no matter what the dispensationalists might say. That is Jesus Christ.

And He goes forth on that white horse. And brethren, there is another place in Revelation that speaks the same truth. I saw in heaven opened and behold, a white horse and the one sitting on it called Faithful and True and in Righteousness.

He judges and makes war. He is making war. He is defeating His enemies.

He is ruling the nations with a rod of iron. And He is beating down His enemies into submission. You don't see it, but I'll tell you this, every time a sinner unrepentant dies, place another neck right under His heel.

No more fight left in that person. He is subduing one after another after another. You can talk about the fact that two people die every second.

That fast. And you know what's happening? The vast majority of them, they are being subdued for good. Enemies brought totally into subjection.

They will not mock. They will not resist any longer. They will not be defiant.

They will not say any longer. We will not have this man to rule over us. It's done.

He is ruling over them and He has subjected them completely. They will not bow willingly. Now their knee will bend unwillingly.

Be certain, brethren. Be certain. So how does this connect with us? Brethren, for one thing, we need to let Scripture speak.

Let's go back to Ephesians. If you're not there, go back to Ephesians. Because the real issue in all of this is how does this connect with you and me who are Christians? I mean, if we're seated together with Christ, you know, here, Pastor, you've portrayed this, painted this picture, and He's triumphant and He's seated the right hand of majesty.

That's where He is, the place of honor. Ruling, reigning, dominion. He is the Adonai who sits at the right hand of Jehovah.

What does that mean for us? Is that just forensic? Well, now we go on our way with our legal reality. Brethren, that is not what Paul has in mind. You say, how do you know? Brethren, Ephesians 1.19. Go back there.

See, this isn't the first time we're getting hit with this reality. It was said a little bit different before that you may know what is the immeasurable greatness of God's power toward us who believe. You see what the issue is? It's power towards us.

According to the working of God's great might that He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places. Where are we? With Him in the heavenly places. Far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and above every name that is named not only in this age, but also in the one to come.

But here's what I want you to see. Paul doesn't want you to think about this as some forensic legal reality that just has no practical implications. What he's saying is your being bound together with Christ has everything to do with power.

Towards you. That's the connection. Don't miss that.

Don't lose that. That's exactly what Paul... Remember, he's praying for them. He wants them to be able to comprehend.

And as he's talking about this being seated together with Christ in the heavenly places, the very thing, the very context, he's still formulating his argument from that verse. That's what all of this has been about. Showing you the power of God, whereas once you were dead in sin, trespasses and sins, following the course of this world, the Prince of the Power of the Air, all that, and lust, and sons of disobedience, and under God's wrath, God has powerfully, this is the power towards you, He has powerfully brought you out and put you in this exalted position.

Don't lose the reality of that. Brethren, great demonstrations of power have come to pass in all this. Jesus Christ went to that cross and there was power.

It says He disarmed His enemies. He ripped the arms from them. He took their swords.

He took their guns. He disarmed those enemies. He subdued them and put them to open shame.

Does that have anything to do with you? Your life and power in your life? Brethren, it has everything to do with it. Everything. Don't lose this.

Christ has taken such a position above demonic powers and will continue to wage war from His exalted position. Every one of these rebels being entirely destroyed. That's what's basically in process.

That is Christ's position and that is the Christian position. So, again, what does it mean? Brethren, I come to the commentaries. So, okay, let me just give you an example.

One commentator says, Jesus' entrance into the heavenly places is a pledge that we shall also enter there. That we shall also enter there. What's the basic problem with that? Paul isn't saying we shall enter there.

He says we're already there. Now look, these statements I'm going to tell you here, I don't disagree with them. I just disagree that this is what Paul's main point is right here.

Are there future realities? Yes. Obviously. You can say physically, I'm not seated on that throne obviously.

Physically, you're here. You're seated here. You're looking this way.

We recognize that. You don't have to be convinced of that. Here's another commentator.

Christ has entered into heaven as the forerunner to take possession of heaven for His people in their name, in their behalf. But see, again, this does not properly stress the past tense of our already being seated with Christ. You see, we come behind.

He's the forerunner. We come behind in the future. But that's not what he's saying.

He says we are there together with Him. Here's another commentator. We are made to sit already.

Ah, now that, see that? That's doing justice. But then listen to what he says right after. Which is so said because of the certainty of it.

For the same glory Christ has, we shall have. But see, as soon as he says we're already there, right off to the future he goes. I'm telling you, it is really difficult for reformed people to really lay hold on some of the realities that are true about our life right now.

And to stay there without immediately running off to the future. Another commentator says, Christ rose from the dead and ascended up into heaven. Not as a private person, but as the common head and parent, root and representative of His church and people, so that what He has done, the Christian may be said to have done.

They rose in Him and are set down in heaven in Him. And blessed be God for the well-grounded hopes. See, it's future.

That as we now sit together in Christ, so ere long we shall forever sit together with Christ. You see what he says? He says now we sit together in Christ. In the future, we'll sit together with Christ.

What's the problem with that? It's not what Paul's saying. Paul isn't saying we sit together in Christ and then it will be with Christ. He's saying we're already seated with Him.

Together with Him. See, I agree with what these guys are saying. Don't get me wrong.

They just keep going to the future. That's the problem. Listen, what Paul is vitally wanting you to feel and comprehend is the power of this reality for now.

The power that has been revealed from God towards you as a believer being this power that raises Christ and seats Him at His right hand in the heavenly places. That is the vital link. It is a present reality.

There is much. Brethren, I know there is much that we hope for and wait in anticipation of, but all these future references miss something that has already happened and is happening. Look, here's what's being said.

God has given us, you and me, Christian, joint seat together in the heavenly regions so that we have part. Now get this, we have part. But, we have a shared lot in the reign of Christ and the possession of Christ and the dominion of Christ and the power of Christ.

Brethren, when you go look at those verses in Revelation, there's an army riding behind Him. You don't want to write that off to simply what happens to you after you have died. That's a reality that's true of you now.

Brethren, the world, sin, death, hell, the flesh, Satan, with all of their misery and all of their wretchedness, they have come under the feet of Christ. But they have come under our feet too. And if you don't believe that, you're not paying close enough attention.

And one of the reasons you don't believe it if you just heard me say it and don't believe it is because you've been so programmed not to believe it that when you actually come across those verses when you're reading, you don't believe them. You just go right past them. You see, it's like saying to them, we're already seated.

Well, I know we will be seated. No, we're already seated. Well, I know we will be seated.

We're dead to sin. Well, I know we will be dead to sin. No, we're dead to sin.

You see, you read these verses in Scripture, and they go right past your head. You say, what are you talking about? What sort of verses are you talking about? Well, how about this? They sang a new song in Revelation. Worthy are you to take the scroll and open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you

ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.

And you have made them... It's interesting. New KJV says that we have been made kings and priests. Now, I know there's a textual issue.

You want to see a kingdom of priests? Okay. But you know what? Whichever way you want to go on that, you know what it says right after that? Priests who are God and they shall reign on earth. You are reigning on earth.

We are the reigning ones together with Christ. Did you ever read there at the end of Mark? They went forth and they were evangelizing and they were doing miracles. And Christ was working together with them.

Through them. How about this? Revelation 20, verse 6, Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection. Brethren, what's the first resurrection? You've been made alive together with Christ.

If you share in that, over such the second death has no power, but more than that, they will be priests of God and of Christ. That's us. We can make offerings.

We are priests. We can offer praise. We can offer sacrifices.

And they will reign with Him for a thousand years. That thousand years, I say, brethren, is symbolic. I don't think you want to take that literally.

You say, well, that's revelation. That's a hard book to understand. Okay? How about when Paul comes to the Corinthians and he says this to them? All things are yours.

You possess everything. Whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or future, all are yours. And you are Christ's and Christ is God's.

How about this? Romans 5.17 says, Much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life. You've been justified. You are reigning.

How about this? Romans 8.37, Knowing all these things, we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. Brethren, what you have is you possess all. You are reigning.

You are more than conquerors. You know this verse. Paul says to the Christians, God of peace is shortly going to crush Satan's head under your foot.

Under your feet. Brethren, evangelizing this world out here, Christ says this, Lo, I am with you always to the end of the world. I reign.

You have free reign. Go witness, go make disciples, and go baptize them. You have power to go make disciples.

Go make them. Brethren, think about what this says concerning our vantage point. You say, what do you mean? I mean this.

You know what? So often in this, brethren, it's this reformed influence. Again, the reformed movement, the reformed thinking, so much of the reformed doctrine. Brethren, I embrace, I use that title.

But let me tell you this, there can be with this emphasis on corruption and depravity of the believer, we can be made to see the Christian as being like this, oh, wretched man that I am, wallowing in this mire of stuff and pollution and filth, and always reaching up. You see the vantage point Paul gives you? You are seated together with Christ. Notice the vantage point.

Notice how we approach everything. You approach sin. You approach the flesh.

You approach the world. You approach Satan. All from above.

All from the position of triumph. So that what? So that you get verses in Scripture like you are no debtor to the flesh. You're above it.

You owe it nothing. The flesh that you still have hanging on, you're no debtor to it. You owe it nothing.

When it says, do this for me, do that. Remember when you were lost? Yes, yes, you just went where it led. I'm no debtor to you.

Sit down. I rule and I reign with my Lord Jesus Christ. I'm seated together in that place of dominion.

I approach life from that perspective. That's the right way. Brethren, we're seated together.

What does Scripture say? Sin no longer has dominion. What are you told to do? Do not let sin reign in your mortal body. What? You can just say that? Isn't it amazing? Paul can come along and say, any of you used to steal? Any of you used to be a thief? Let the thief no longer steal.

What? Is that it? Some people are shocked. Are you viewing pornography? Stop. What? I need a book.

It's got to have like six or eight chapters. I mean, you've got to give me the plan. Paul goes around and he says, stop it.

What? Did you just say that? No! He doesn't just say that. He says things like that after he says, you're seated with Christ in the heavenly places. Sin.

Stop. The world. Brethren, have you ever read? We've actually been translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of His dear Son.

You're in a different realm now. You don't live there anymore. The world has no say on you anymore.

You're not controlled by it. Jesus Christ said of His disciples, they're not of the world. Even as I'm not of the world.

They're not of the world. You're not of the world. You conquer the world.

What conquers the world? Your faith conquers the world. You overcome. Brethren, when you see sin in Scripture, no dominion.

When you see law, not under it. When you see the flesh, no debtor to it. When you see everything, Paul says, it's all yours.

Scripture says you reign. Scripture says the world, you're not of it. The kingdom of darkness? You've been translated out of it.

All of this. The devil, the God of peace, will soon crush Satan under your feet. Under your feet.

You say, well, why didn't He say Christ? Exactly. Are you not getting it? He says, resist the devil and he will flee from you. That's the kind of stuff Scripture says.

Put on the whole armor of God that you will be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. You ever read there in 1 John 5? The evil one does not touch Him. Who? You.

Doesn't touch you. Wow. I'm writing to you, young men, because you've overcome the evil one.

You think about the Gospel. Make disciples. I'm with you.

Go. You see, Paul is clearly saying there's a power that is towards you. But you see the vantage point? You're going along and you're struggling with whatever.

Sexual sin seems to be a big one. But, there are the sins of the mind. There's pride.

There's jealousy. You're going along. Brethren, you're not like some pig wallowing in the mire trying to figure out how to get up out of it.

Paul says, don't you know who you are, where you are, and what posture you have? This is how you approach life. This is how you approach sin. This is how you approach the flesh.

This is how you approach the world. This is how you approach the devil. This is how you approach evangelizing out there.

Brethren, you think about this. You are seated where God is. I mean, basically, the reality that we find is therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy place, the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that He opened for us through the curtain, that is through His flesh, since we have a great High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near.

The Christian is there, seated, right hand of majesty. We are there. We are in the inner sanctum.

We are where the Shekinah glory is. You are seated together in that heavenly place. You are able to find the living God.

You have access. You're there. Right hand.

A place of intimacy. A place of closeness. You should have that, brethren, if you're seated together with Christ in the heavenly places.

We need to realize our position. We need to live accordingly. Scripture is all the time telling us draw near.

Draw near to God. How many times the Hebrew says that? Draw near. Draw near.

There's access. That's where we are together. We're seated.

We're at that place of privilege. Now. Right now.

And I just leave you with this word. Because it's similar, but it's not exactly the same. But what Paul says to the Colossians, he says, if then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above where Christ is.

Seated at the right hand of God. Think about that. If you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above where Christ is at the right hand of God.

Seek the things that are there where Christ is. You say, well, what's there to be sought? Well, he tells you. That's where Christ is.

At the right hand of God. What things are there? Well, primarily, God and Christ. The vantage point of the Christian.

Brethren, this is like Conrad said. It's very freeing to the people of God. Brethren, this is the mindset.

You need to go out of here saying that. I am raised together with Christ. I am seated together with Christ.

I am dead to sin. I have died to the law. I am a citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven.

I have come to Mount Zion. I have come to God the Judge and Christ the Mediator. And the blood that speaks better things than the blood of Abel.

I have come there. I am there. I am seated there.

I do reign. I do have dominion. I do conquer.

I do overcome. That's the power of God that you might know. What is the immeasurable greatness of His power toward you, believer? That's the issue.

Do you know it? Recite these. Tell yourself, get to know it. And live in the reality of it.

Well, may God help us, brethren. It will free you. Don't view the Christian life as always wallowing in the depths, trying to climb up out of the gutter.

If you've been made alive with Christ, that's not your vantage point to this life or to anything in it. Live like free men. More than that, live as a ruler and a conqueror with Christ.

You're no dupe to the devil anymore. Listen, he full well is aware of language in the Bible about his own head being under your feet, which by the way is a fulfillment of a promise made way back concerning Christ. You think Paul means us to make a connection? You better believe it.

It is together with Christ. You try to do any of this on your own, you will be chewed up and spit out. You will be damned and destroyed.

It is only the power of God, the same power that raised Christ from the dead and seated Him at the right hand in the heavenly places. Brethren, live like you believe such power is toward you. Not like you're some defeated ball of corruption, massive failure, wretched man.

You are approaching the Christian life all wrong. If that's your mindset. Father, I pray that these truths would master us.

I pray in Christ's name, Amen.

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