

Week 2 - Handout

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Abide Above -  
Miles Stanford  
a guide to growth

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Das Buch - E. S. W.

1870  
1871

Chapter 11  
THINK POSITION!

**Our position in the Lord Jesus Christ is made up of two parts: death, and life. Identification with Him in His death issues in identification with Him in His life. Spiritual growth is the result of the old man abiding in the death of the Cross, and the new man abiding in the risen life of Christ. The way of the Cross doesn't end at the Cross!**

The principles on which our Father carries out His purpose in us are eternal and unchanging. He is "the Father of lights, with whom is no variability, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17). He begins in the heights, goes down to the depths, and returns to the heights.

Let us consider this principle as illustrated in the work of the Lord Jesus. He came down to earth from His heavenly glory (John 17:4); He was made to be our sin on the Cross, and willingly died as our Redeemer (Rom. 5:8); He took us down into His death unto sin as our Deliverer (Rom. 6:4); He then brought us as "new creations" in Himself to His eternal position in Heaven (II Cor. 5:17; Eph. 2:4-6). Life, death, harvest!

**Position Above** — Our Father begins by placing each believer *above* — in Christ — the very moment he repents and receives Him as his personal Saviour. "Ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins... hath He quickened [recreated] together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses" (Col. 2:12, 13). Yes, "your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3). This is exactly where the Father has positioned every believer, whether or not he is aware of the wondrous fact; whether in service, or out of service; whether victorious, or defeated.

**Position Unknown** — Although the Christian has been positioned above, he is unaware of this fact when he comes to the Saviour at the foot of the Cross. What he sees is that the penalty of his sins has been paid, and that he is thereby assured of his place in Glory. Therefore, most new converts commence to live and work *for* Him from the motive of gratitude for their salvation. The usual exhortation they are given is, "Now get busy and serve the Lord." This they seek to do on the basis of the birth truths. From this inadequate ground the majority of young Christians go down in defeat.

Others, more thoroughly taught, move forward in the knowledge of their reconciliation to God,

their acceptance in the Lord Jesus, as well as their completeness and eternal security in Him. Even with this firm foundation upon which to stand, they have still to learn that there is more needed. The resultant failure in trying to live by these basic truths is the Father's preparation for the Christian to realize his need for deliverance.

The Holy Spirit then begins to reveal the truths that will deliver him from the reign of sin (Rom. 5:21). The Lord Jesus has promised that "ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). This freedom does not come from general truth in the Word, important as that is, but from specific truths.

In the key Book of Romans there is nothing said about growth until the problem of righteousness is completely settled. To the middle of Chapter Five the subject is justification from sins based on the substitutionary work of the Lord Jesus, and it is that birth truth upon which many attempt to gain maturity in Him. After Romans 5:11, Scripture begins to speak of "justification of *life*", and, "reigning in *life*" (vss. 17, 18) — the life we need in order for the Lord Jesus to be manifested.

It is important to note that Romans 1:1—5:11 present God's remedy for the *penalty* of sins, while

Romans 6—8 present God's remedy for the *power* of sin. The blood secures forgiveness for my sins; the Cross secures deliverance for me, the sinner. These are facts that not only bring new birth and promise Heaven, but provide His overcoming resurrection life for the here and now. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

**Position Appreciated** — It is the captive, dominated by the wretched self-life, to whom the identification truths call. This struggling one, who has long been plagued by doubt, defeat, discouragement, and depression, is being prepared to enter into the reality of the provision set forth in Romans 6—8. Through the practical experience of prolonged personal failure, he has been made aware of self's bankruptcy.

In the light of that realization he is able to appreciate the positional truth that self, the old man, was identified with the Lord Jesus in His crucifixion (Rom. 6:6). This is the Gospel for the Christian! Our Saviour dealt not only with the symptoms but with the disease, the root as well as the fruit. We have His substitution for our sins; we have identification with Him in His death for sinful self.

Our Father takes us down until the self-life

is uncovered, and then up as the truth of the Christ-life is discovered. This spiritual principle cannot be circumvented. To attempt to "climb up some other way" is futile. God's truth, ministered in God's way by God's Spirit, alone frees. And that freedom is centered in our invulnerable position "in Christ."

The Holy Spirit knows what processing is required for each individual to learn that self deserves nothing but death, and that the Lord Jesus Christ is his life. To learn *all* the truth about the former takes a lifetime, to say the least; *all* the truth about the latter will not be exhausted throughout eternity. Hence He patiently teaches enough about self through failure to enable us to learn of Christ for triumph.

**Position Accepted** — Through the work of the Cross, our Father has not only positionally freed us and made each of us "accepted in the Beloved" (Eph. 1:6), but has also made us "complete in Him." "For it is in Christ that the fulness of God's nature dwells embodied, and in Him you are made complete" (Col. 2:9, Wey.). It is in Him we are to abide; He is the very source of our Christian life. To abide is to remain where one has already been enlived and positioned. It is in Him that we rest, fellowship, and grow — far above all.

Where is the Lord Jesus today? He is risen and set at the Father's right hand (Eph. 1:20, 21). It is when the Christian understands his *death-position* that he is enabled to see his *life-position* in the risen Lord Jesus. Therefore he counts himself recreated, alive unto God in Christ Jesus (Rom. 6:11b).

The believer's enlightened faith follows effortlessly, because he now sees himself exactly where he has been positioned all along: "For ye died [unto the old self-life, at Calvary], and your life [new creation, raised in His resurrection and ascension] is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3). Now he can begin walking "in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4).

When the Holy Spirit gives us adequate apprehension of our risen position, we are able spontaneously to reckon ourselves "alive unto God in Jesus Christ." Thus we are drawn to the Source of our life, and there we learn to rest — and *abide above!*