

**From the series: Faith That Possesses All Things**

## **The Essential Difference between Our Legal Position and Vital Experience in Christ**

God is a superlative God. He gives us the permission to magnify, exalt and enlarge Him in our minds to see if we can exaggerate His greatness. No matter how great the image of God we conceive, He is greater than that. There is more in Him than we have seen, much more in Him than we have experienced, and so much more in Him than what we have ever known. Paul, the Apostle of grace refers to the revelation he received from Christ as the unsearchable riches of Christ, which can never be exhausted for eternity.

*“Even when we were dead in sins,...”* (Ephesians 2:5) This description is in the past tense. Mankind was spiritually dead and separated from God. This separation from God has consequences on every realm of life: spiritually, mentally, physically, socially and financially. But He *“has quickened us together with Christ.”*

Historically, when Jesus Christ was resurrected, you were not there. But positionally and judicially, in the mind of God, you were there. At the resurrection of Christ, He was quickened by the glory of the Father as your substitute. This means that He stood in as you. What He did was accredited into your account. In the mind of God, what He did is what you did. He did it, you got it.

On the cross, you died with Christ and every demand of justice towards you stating that you were a sinner under the curse of the law, possessing the consequences of Adam’s fall, was legally satisfied because you died on the cross. On the third day, you were resurrected with Him. This is because substitution implies that for every statement made of Christ, there is a parallel statement made of the believer; when Christ was quickened and resurrected, the believer was quickened and resurrected with Him. The Pauline revelation tells us that whatever Christ says of Himself, the believer has the right to say of himself by virtue of his union with Christ. Not because of what you have done by yourself, but because of what Christ has done that is credited to your account as a result of His substitution. But there is an essential difference between our legal position in Christ and our vital experience in Him.

Paul describes our position in Christ and reveals the method of receiving all that God has done for us in Christ. Your identity is that which you personally associate with. Something has to change and the change you experience in your life does not begin from the outside but from the inside of you, in your mind. The only way God changes your life is by exchanging it. At the cross, there was an exchange and that great exchange was God offering Himself for us. His righteousness for our sin, His blessedness for our curse, His state of being the beloved of the Father to be forsaken of God. We need to be able to reckon (Romans 6:11), take an inventory of what took place at the cross. If you opened your bank account and realize there was ten million dollars in it, you will be afraid to use it until you can trace the origin of the transaction that

brought that sum into your account. You will not have the confidence to spend it. This is what I call *to reckon*. When you reckon the transaction, you now have the confidence to use what is yours. God has revealed this glorious inheritance in Christ, but until we are able to reckon the transaction of that great exchange and stop living as though we are not blessed, we will not benefit from it. We will not have the confidence to spend what is in our account because we do not know what is in it and do not know how it found itself there.

*i. Grace is the operation of resurrection power*

Many times, we think of grace as unmerited favour. This is abstract. Paul tells us, '*he has quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved)*'. He is saying that grace is the resurrection power that quickened Jesus from the dead. At the resurrection, the Father exerted the maximum powers of the Godhead; 100% divine omnipotence. When you split an atom, the energy released is known as atomic energy. An atom cannot be perceived without certain scientific mechanisms. There are specific apparatus used to split an atom.

When an atomic bomb is dropped, it is not the fire that causes the destruction, but the energy released. It is so powerful that steel, and even titanium, is vaporized. Atomic energy is not in the category of spiritual power because it's an atom of creation that was split causing a chain reaction releasing atomic energy. The maximum power of the Godhead at the resurrection is presently at work in you. This power is called grace. If you are a minister of Grace, you are a minister of resurrection power. Anything in your life that can be traced to Adam is vaporized by resurrection power.

*ii. To be raised together with Christ means your life does not derive its reality from the earth*

In God's universe, heaven governs the earth. After you were quickened with 100% divine omnipotence, He raised you together with Christ (Eph. 2:6). The word 'raised' means to transfer from the earthly to heavenly. There are people presently living on earth who are not terrestrial. The reality that constitutes who you are is not from earth. We need to go beyond third-dimensional living; in other words, what we can see and understand based on life in the natural plane, because we have been raised. We have been transferred from the earthly into the heavenly. Although you may be present in the body here on earth, what constitutes your person in spirit is that you have been raised to sit together with Christ in heavenly places. Your life does not derive its reality from the earthly. Your experience is where Christ is.

*iii. Our joint-seating with Christ is that we may show forth the exceeding riches of His grace*

The Father placed you in Christ not just for this age but for the ages to come (Ephesians 2:7). The construction of the verse in Ephesians 2:7 says, "*one age upon the other unending*". There is a generation that is going to understand this grace and put on life and immortality. The grace

He has given to us in this age is supposed to continue into other ages. This means there are people in this age who are going to live and continue to other ages.

God did not place you in Christ so that you should enjoy Christ just for yourself; He placed you in Christ, raised you and caused you to sit at His right hand so that He may use you to show forth the exceeding riches of His grace (Eph. 2:7). God is so rich that all of His resources are inestimable. When you have inestimable wealth, you have a problem with demonstrating how wealthy you are. God has a “problem” in demonstrating how wealthy He is, so He has placed His sons and daughters positionally in Christ in heaven, in spirit, and physically on earth simultaneously, so that He can demonstrate His riches through them. Grace is **God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense**. Christ is spending so that we can enjoy God’s riches. It’s like taking Christ’s credit card and all the expenses of what you enjoy in God goes into His account. He did it, you got it.

The physical originates from the spiritual. This means that there is nothing spiritual without a physical impact. You cannot refer to something which is a spiritual reality which does not have physical impact. If we have spiritual riches, those spiritual riches will have an effect in the financial realm to have a physical impact. The reason why the world is experiencing unprecedented economic crises is because God is about to show to this world how rich He is. He is not going to show how rich He is by showing Himself, but He is going to show to the world His sons who have been raised to maturity. God wants to use us as an advertisement. He wants to display to the world how He takes care of His sons and daughters.

The Apostle Paul describes God’s benevolence in a very graphic way. He speaks of the benevolence of God as lascivious goodness. The image he uses is that of a woman who makes herself available. God says I am not holding anything back from you. It is an extravagant kindness.

*iv. Appropriating God’s Extravagant kindness.*

*“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God”* (Eph 2:8).. Everything that God has done or provided through your position in Christ, everything that is your inheritance must be appropriated, received through faith. God may have legally provided it to you through your position in Christ but you may not be vitally experiencing it practically on a daily basis. It is faith that appropriates what grace has provided. This means that there are things which God has provided which are waiting for you.

This is a unique age known as the dispensation of grace. In this dispensation, God deals with men exclusively on the basis of faith alone. This means all that God has done in Christ remains inaccessible if we do not understand how to relate with God on the basis of faith. Faith is the only basis by which God deals with man in this dispensation of Grace. All your prayers and fasting are inconsequential. What God has done by grace must be received by faith.

***God does not operate on the grounds of human merit.***

God will not tolerate you boasting in yourself (Eph. 2:9). He wants the world to see who He is through your life. Religion is that futile attempt of man to seek and gain the approbation of God on the basis of his dead human works. In Ephesians 2:9, the Apostle Paul is not just talking about salvation, but everything that constitutes your wellbeing. It is by grace through faith. The moment you try to work for grace, everything becomes ineffective.

There is a difference between actions that originate from your works and actions that correspond to faith. Faith can never be overemphasized and exhausted because of its place in this dispensation of grace. God deals with man in Christ exclusively on the basis of faith. If there are things you have not yet received, check the basis on which you are relating with God.

***A man has what he believes in life, nothing more, nothing less.***

What you possess in life, what you become, is based on what you believe. Where you are now in life and what you possess in this present time, is what you have believed. In the New Testament, God holds the believer responsible for his vital experience of Christ. This is because the believer is responsible for his faith. The Gospel is not that God is going to do something in your life, or that God is willing to do something in your life. The Gospel is always in the past tense. He has blessed you with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus. Therefore it is not that God has not acted but it is that you have not received what God has done in Christ.

***“Therefore it is of faith that it might be by grace. To the end that the promise shall be sure to all the seed (Romans 4:16)”***

Whatever you receive by grace will be through faith. The promise is sure to everyone in Christ because everything that you receive in this dispensation of grace is exclusively on the basis of faith alone. The reason why certain things have not happened in your life is because you have been walking by sight and not by faith.

## **Conclusion**

There is a difference between being designated as the legal heir and actually inheriting. There are people who are heirs according to a legal document but someone has taken possession of their inheritance. Inheriting the promise is the outcome of faith. Faith that does not inherit is fake. The outcome of faith is that you actually inherit what is stipulated as your inheritance. If you are schooled into faith, walk and stand by faith, uniquely and entirely on the basis of faith, you will inherit and enter into what belongs to you in Christ. The reason why people do not experience the outcome of their faith is because they are generalizing every aspect of their faith. God deals with specificity; until there is specificity, there will be no outcome of your faith.

***Whatever is by faith is stable, secure, certain, and valid (it is not counterfeit).***

*Heavenly Father, thank you because your grace has fully supplied all that I have and all that I possess.*

### **Application questions**

1. The Pauline revelation tells us that whatever Christ says of Himself, the son of God has the right to say of himself. Explain.
2. What is the significance of the ascension and session of Christ in the life of the son of God?
3. How do we appropriate what is ours in Christ?