Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

How to Get in the Game
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When I played college football, my coaches constantly drilled our team with the admonition: "Play your position!" They had to repeat it often because when we saw the play develop toward another place on the field, we were tempted to dash over and try to tackle the guy with the ball. About that time the play would reverse direction to the spot we had just left.

One of our best players was very aggressive and often strayed far from his position. He was all over the field tackling people, and invariably the wrong ones. Finally, he was benched. Though he was a good athlete, he proved worthless to the team because he wouldn't stick to his position.

Since we all tended to make the same mistake, the coach would take us back to the locker room to draw the plays on a chalkboard. He would first make everyone's position plain to see, and then he'd explain how the plays were supposed to run. There's a parallel to that in Christian experience. God has put you on His team and given you both the resources and the obligation to "play" your position in the Body of Christ. He has given you spiritual gifts for carrying out your assignment.

Your first obligation as a Christian is to learn about your position in the Body of Christ. You've got to study the chalkboard, so to speak, and see where you stand; see who's on either side of you, who's behind you, who's in front of you. Unfortunately, many Christians don't know how to live, partly because they don't know their position. I want to draw your position on the spiritual chalkboard so you can be an effective player in the game.

Basically, God's gift of salvation in Christ brings a believer into a position of righteousness. God imputes the perfect righteousness of His Son to the believer, and thereby declares him righteous *positionally*. But as you know full well, believers still have sin in their lives--Christians are not *practically* righteous, 100 percent of the time. However, it is on the basis of our positional righteousness, that we are exhorted to strive for practical righteousness in our daily lives.

If you can set your personal struggle with sin aside for a moment, I want you to consider what the Bible says about your position in Christ. As a Christian you are: spiritually alive unto God, dead to sin, forgiven, declared righteous, a child of God, God's possession, an heir of God, blessed with all spiritual blessings, a citizen of heaven, a servant of God, free from the Law, crucified to the world, a

light in the world, victorious over Satan, cleansed from sin, declared holy and blameless, set free in Christ from the power of sin, secure in Christ, granted peace and rest, and led by the Holy Spirit.

You're probably thinking, "The Bible may say all that, but I sure don't always live up to those descriptions." That's why in the New Testament, for every one of those statements about your position, there is a corresponding practice you're to follow. For example, the New Testament tells you:

- Since you are spiritually alive to God, live according to that new life.
- Since you are dead to sin, don't give sin any place in your life.
- Since you're forgiven, count on that and don't go through life feeling guilty.
- Since you've been declared righteous, live righteously.
- Since you're a child of God, act like one of God's children.
- Since you are God's possession, yield to Him in humble submission.

I'm convinced that if you will honestly study your position in Christ, your life will change. You'll understand that failure in some aspect of Christian living doesn't mean you lose your position. The position of a true Christian is settled forever--it's unchanging and permanent. And on the other hand, just as stumbling won't change your standing for the worse, growth won't add to it for the better either. God's favor doesn't depend on your works. God "has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity" (2 Timothy 1:9).

Positionally, you cannot increase or decrease in the favor of God. As a genuine Christian, nothing you do, or fail to do, can change to the slightest degree your perfect standing before God--for "in Him you have been made complete" (Colossians 2:10).

Thankfully, that completeness does not mean that when you understand your position you will remain as you are--no, you will see changes in your life. The New Testament continually emphasizes your identity as a believer and urges you understand and apply your spiritual resources. As you continue to mature in Christ, you will not only come to a greater understanding of who you are, but you'll also rely more consistently on your resources--those granted to you as a result of your position in Christ--to handle the practical aspects of Christian living. That's the thrust of Paul's appeal in Ephesians 4:1: "Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called."

So what about you, Christian--do you know your position? If not, go back to the locker room and study the chalkboard--your Bible--and you'll discover afresh the joy of who you are in Christ. If so, get in the game, play your position, and become in practice what you already are in position.

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