

Session 61: Our Identity Mercies in Christ

(Note: Mike refers to this under the old system as Establishment, Part 10, Session 61).

Our Former Identification in Adam

We did have a former identification in Adam and we need to know how God viewed that. In fact, he gave us a name, of sorts, in accordance with that identification. Knowing this gives great appreciation for our new identification in Christ.

We turn to 1 Corinthians 15 where Paul is dealing with the doctrine of the resurrection from the dead. While he does this, he is going to be talking about the phrases “in Adam” and “in Christ.” Before we trusted Christ as our Savior, we had an identification “in Adam” and there were consequences with that association. Physical death is one of those consequences.

1 Corinthians 15:21 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. ²² For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

We saw the phrase “in Adam.” To illustrate our former condition in Adam, we need to see a complete picture of our standing.

In our former identification in Adam, we were condemned by God’s justice. Everything we did was an abomination to God, and because of whom we belonged to (the power of darkness) we were alienated from God.

Just to kind of jump ahead for a moment, now that we have an identification “in Christ,” instead of condemnation, we have justification. Instead of abomination, we have sanctification and fruit unto holiness. Instead of alienation, we have glorification or exaltation.

When Adam sinned back in the garden of Eden by eating of the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, he became a sinner by nature: unrighteous, ungodly, and the opposite of what he was created to be. When Adam had children, all those things were passed on to them. They were in Adam according to the Bible. That in Adam identity was passed down to us when we were born into the world.

We now turn to Romans 1 where the apostle Paul is putting forth the message of the gospel of grace. The first part set forth in Paul’s gospel is the wrath of God; all men were under that wrath due to their sinful condition.

Romans 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

Our Condemnation Status in Adam

The first element of our condemnation that we possessed because of our being in Adam, is that we were under sin. Romans 1:18-32 sets forth the reality of that.

In Romans 2, after establishing the fact that men were under the wrath of God because of their sin nature, Paul sets forth the second part of the gospel: no man can escape the wrath of God by any good works they produce. This leads us to the second element of our condemnation in that we were all unrighteous.

The reason for this is that the only righteousness that God can accept is perfect righteousness. Verse 7 of Romans 2 tells us that the only kind of righteousness that is acceptable to God is a continual “well doing.” That characterizes a person’s whole life from the time they come into the world until they die.

***Romans 2:7** To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:*

Notice that verse said “patient continuance.” Continuance means there is no break in the “well doing.” This is the only kind of righteousness that is acceptable to God’s justice. In other words, the standard is perfection.

As the Bible makes clear, that standard is too high for a man to meet on his own. If a man thinks that occasionally or even often well doing is going to meet that standard, he is mistaken, and he will find that out at the judgment. It would be better to see the fallacy of that thinking and abandon that idea right now. Anyone who thinks they will escape God’s wrath on the basis of their good works could not be more wrong.

Putting the first two items under our condemnation in Adam together, that we were under sin and we had no perfect righteousness, shows us why we were under condemnation. This was our identification in Adam. We were sinners and we were unrighteous. Now we go to Romans 5 for the third element of our condemnation.

***Romans 5:10** For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.*

Paul said, “we were enemies.” That is the third element of the condemnation component we were identified with in Adam.

After all that described regarding our position in Adam, Paul was able to look back and apply a name to us: enemies. Now let us sum up what we have so far. First, we were sinners by nature. Secondly, we were unrighteous. We were unable to produce righteousness that God could accept.

Finally, we were enemies, living our lives in a way that puts us at enmity with God. Those three elements composed the fullness of our condemnation identity in Adam.

Those three things alone were enough to condemn us to the lake of fire. That is not all. We still have the elements of our abomination status and alienation status to complete our identification that we had in Adam.

Our Abomination Status in Adam

The second area of our standing in Adam was our abomination status before God. This had to do with our conduct and behavior as we followed a certain course of living in this world. As you will see, everything we were doing was an abomination in God's sight.

Now we turn our attention to Romans 6. It is in Romans 6 that Paul teaches us about our sanctified position in Christ. In this section of scripture, Paul says some things about our former status in Adam. The way we lived was contrary and displeasing to God.

***Romans 6:20** For when ye were the **servants of sin**, ye were free from righteousness.*

Paul said we were "servants of sin." That is more than just being under sin. Being servants of sin means that the things we did served sin. That was an offense to God's holiness and character; as such, there was an abomination factor to the things we did, no matter what those things were.

The first element of the abomination component that we had in Adam is that we were "servants of sin."

The second element is found in verse 20 as well.

***Romans 6:20** For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were **free from righteousness**. **21**What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.*

Now Paul said that we were not only servants of sin, but we were also "free from righteousness." We already knew that we were unrighteous, but this is something more. We not only had no righteousness to commend ourselves to God, but we were functionally dead to righteousness. The righteousness that we tried to produce was actually filth before God. There was no pleasantness to God in those good works we tried to perform because we were essentially dead to righteousness.

Before we were saved, our attempts at righteousness are valued no differently than they were in Isaiah's description.

Isaiah 64:6 But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

Isaiah said that a man's righteousness was as "filthy rags." Being "free from righteousness" was the second element of our abomination standing in Adam.

As we were born in sin and were enemies of God, all we ever did was bring forth things that were an abomination to God. In being servants of sin and being free from righteousness, we were actually following the course of another, who was glorified by our sinfulness and unrighteousness, and that is the last aspect of our abomination standing in Adam.

Ephesians 2:1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; ² Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: ³ Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

That is the third element of our abomination standing; we walked according to the "course of this world." In doing so, we actually followed Satan. It was the adversary who worked in us as we functioned as the "children of disobedience." When we fulfilled the lusts of our flesh, it worked in his favor. It made us enemies of God and the children of wrath. That lifestyle contributed to the work that Satan was seeking to accomplish in the world to maintain his usurped possession of the earth.

What was well pleasing to the adversary was an abomination to God. The progression goes like this: being born an unrighteous sinner and being by nature the enemy of God, man began to live like the sinner that he was. He served sin, he was dead to righteousness, and the way he lived his life was in accordance with the course that Satan had charted for this world. Man's very life was an abomination to a holy and righteous God. Man lived in compliance with the plan of evil and the course that Satan had determined for the world.

Our Alienation Status in Adam

This brings us to the alienation aspect of our standing in Adam.

*Ephesians 2:11 Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called **Uncircumcision** by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; ¹² That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:*

Being Gentiles, we possessed a further alienation than just being alien from the life of God by being dead in our sins. We were twice dead before God.

Colossians 2:13 And you, **being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh**, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

As a natural son of Adam, we were dead in sins. We were also dead as Gentiles. When God separated Abram out, he left the rest of the world to Satan. From that time forward, God's revealed plan and purpose involved the nation of Israel which would come from Abraham. From Abram God brought the nation of Israel into existence. The rest of the nations became dead to God 'in the uncircumcision of their flesh.' God was nigh to Israel but far off from the Gentiles. We were without God in the world. That is program alienation. So we will label this element of our alienation standing as "uncircumcision." That was the name given to us in our collective alienation from God. You can see that it is capitalized in Ephesians 2 indicating that it is the name that was given to us to describe our standing before God.

The second element of our alienation is the fact that we belonged to Satan.

Colossians 1:12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: ¹³ Who hath **delivered us from the power of darkness**, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

The Adversary had a rightful claim on us Gentiles from the time of tower of Babel. This can be seen in the temptations that were set before Jesus by the devil.

Luke 4:5 And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him **all the kingdoms of the world** in a moment of time. ⁶ And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for **that is delivered unto me**; and to whomsoever I will I give it. ⁷ If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.

All of the kingdoms were "delivered" to Satan. This was not a lie and the Lord did not correct or dispute what Satan was saying. The nations of the world belonged to him. When Adam sinned, the dominion of the world, which Adam formerly possessed, Satan usurped. But at the tower of Babel, the Lord gave the nations of the world up to walk in their own ways. God separated out Abram and from him called out the nation through which he would work to reconcile the world back to himself.

Now we go to Ephesians 2.

Ephesians 2:1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; ² Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world,

according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: ³ Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

Verse 3 said that what we were doing in fulfilling the desires of the flesh made us good citizens of Satan's kingdom. We did not just belong to Satan we cooperated with him.

Once we were saved, we were put into Christ and given an identification in Christ that eliminated all of these things and replaced them all with new issues that make three new components. This is our justification, our sanctification, and our exaltation. Each of these new components are also made up of three elements and they are the counter to all that we were in Adam.

In Adam

1. Condemnation:

- 1) Under Sin
- 2) Unrighteous
- 3) Enemies

2. Abomination:

- 1) Servants of Sin
- 2) Free from Righteousness
- 3) Course of this world

3. Alienation:

- 1) Uncircumcision
- 2) Satan's Possession
- 3) Aided the Adversary

Our Justification Status In Christ

Let us turn to Ephesians 2, where Paul starts out by reminding us of our former position in Adam.

***Ephesians 2:1** And you hath he quickened, who were **dead in trespasses and sins;**
² **Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:** ³ **Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.***

Those are some of the elements that made up our condemnation, abomination, and alienation standing in Adam. Now notice what comes next.

***Ephesians 2:4** But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, ⁵Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) ⁶And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:*

That was a description of what has been done for us as we are “in Christ.”

Now let us move into the specific elements of our justification component “in Christ.”

Justification: Forgiveness

Romans 4:7 *Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.*

Ephesians 1:7 *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;*

The first element of our justification is the forgiveness of all our sins. Before, when we were in Adam there was nothing we could do about our sins. We could not get rid of them by any action of our own. There was also nothing we could ever do to gain God’s forgiveness for those sins.

It was the work of the Lord Jesus that completely satisfied God’s wrath on our sins when he took those sins upon himself. Isaiah says that God shall see the ‘travail of his soul and be satisfied.’

Space for personal reflection and notes

Session 62: Our Identity Mercies in Christ, Continued

(Note: Mike refers to this under the old system as Establishment, Part 10, Session 62).

Isaiah 53:11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

The last part of that verse said that Christ would ‘bear iniquities.’ That is exactly what he did on the cross, when he was made a curse for us.

Galatians 3:13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

(Note: Mike does not follow notes from this point. You will need to read these scriptures and notes on your own, just listen, and take your own notes. Then skip to page 1099 Relationship Prayer, where Mike picks back up with the printed notes.)

Christ took upon himself our sins, and God’s wrath was poured out on him so that when we put our faith in his work on the cross, God’s justice is satisfied and we get forgiveness of all our sins: past, present, and future. There is no need to beg God to forgive you for sins you will yet commit; they are already forgiven. This is a difficult concept for Christians to get used to. We are used to asking God to forgive us when we sin, but the Bible says that we have already been forgiven all our sins. It happened the moment we trusted Jesus Christ to be our Savior. That is part of our justification.

Colossians 2:13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

Titus 2:13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; ¹⁴ Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Notice two things in that passage: the “redeem us from all iniquity” has to do with our justification, and the “purify unto himself” has to do with our sanctification. The “zealous of good works” certainly fits in with our sanctification but in some ways it also has our exaltation in view. We will see this a little later on. If a man is not “zealous of good works” then he does not understand what he is supposed to understand concerning who he has been made to be in Christ.

Nevertheless, the main point from this passage now is that we have been redeemed from “all iniquity.” On our chart we will mark this as ‘forgiven all sins.’ That is the first element of our justification.

Justification: Righteousness

The second element of our justification is that Christ’s righteousness has been imputed to our account. In fact, the word justification means to declare or make righteous.

The problem that God had to overcome in redemption was how to justify sinners without condoning sin or showing man’s sin to be reasonable. God cannot compromise his justice or treat sin lightly because he is holy!

The law (and therefore, God’s justice) demands the death penalty for every sin.

Ezekiel 18:4 Behold, all souls are mine... the soul that sinneth, it shall die.

We have been made the righteousness of God in Christ. Our faith is counted for righteousness. We are going to look in the book of Romans to see some detail regarding this second element of our justification.

Remember that Paul starts off in the book of Romans by introducing them to the first element of who they are in Christ. That is the justification component of our new identification in Jesus Christ. Paul uses the first five chapters of Romans to instruct regarding justification and the three elements that make it up.

We have already seen the forgiveness element and now we are looking at the second element of our justification which is the righteousness of Christ that has been imputed to our account.

Romans 3:20 *Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. ²¹ But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; ²² Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: ²³ For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; ²⁴ **Being justified freely by his grace** through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: ²⁵ Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; ²⁶ **To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.***

The moment we put our faith in Jesus Christ, the righteousness of God, which was offered to us in the gospel, came upon us. Through faith, we were justified by grace.

Now look back at verse 22. The righteousness of God is “unto all.” This is to say that the offer of God’s righteousness was “unto” everyone. Then look at the next phrase: “upon all them that believe.” The righteousness that is offered unto everyone comes “upon all that believe.” It was offered *to* us in the gospel, and when we trusted Jesus Christ as our Savior, it came *upon* us.

This is the main concept in our justification. Of all three elements, this element of “imputed righteousness” best describes the justification process. We were washed from our former identification in Adam, cleansed from our sins, and the righteousness of Jesus Christ was imputed to us.

When we look at verse 26, we see that God is “just, and the justifier...” God is “just” when he imputes his righteousness to us, as Christ has made provision for it. God took something that was compatible with his justice and that was his righteousness he imputed to us. That is why we are justified and made the righteousness of God in Christ. Imputed righteousness is the second element of our justification.

*Romans 4:3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. ...⁵ But to him that worketh not, but **believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.**⁶ Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,⁷ Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.⁸ Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.*

The only people who do not rejoice in this passage are those who are counting on their baptism or some other experience to save them. Paul is clear; a man’s faith is counted for righteousness!

Justification: Atonement

For the third element, we go to Romans 5. What we are after here is the reconciliation action. This gets introduced to us in verse 10 and then the details are found in verses 11-21. But in leading up to this, we are going to see the contrast of our former position in Adam which is past tense.

Romans 5:6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

Notice the phrase “when we were yet...” This is how it used to be for us before we were saved. We were “without strength” and we were “ungodly.” Why is Paul going back and speaking of how we were in former offensive standing in Adam? Paul is showing us where we were so that we can appreciate what Christ has accomplished for us in justifying us unto eternal life.

We have to understand that God cannot just overlook sin. He cannot just snap his fingers and make it all go away. God not only has mercy but he has justice. Justice demands a payment for sin. We were the sinners and God's justice would direct God's wrath against us. But when we trusted in Jesus Christ all that changed for us. Paul continues to rehearse the theme of the way we used to be all the way up through chapter five.

***Romans 5:7** For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.⁸ But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, **while we were yet sinners**, Christ died for us.*

Romans 5:7 is another reference to our former offensive position in Adam, especially those things connected with our condemnation component (under sin, unrighteous, enemies of God). Now, in the very next verses, we are going to see Paul setting forth some assurance doctrines.

***Romans 5:9** Much more then, **being now** justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.¹⁰ For if, **when we were enemies**, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.*

Verse 9 said that “now” we are justified by his blood. We are now “saved from wrath.” That is the wrath of God as it is directed against sin. See in verse 10 the reference to our standing as “enemies” back when we were in Adam. But we are not enemies any more; now we are “reconciled.” We have peace with God; we are no longer at odds with God.

***Romans 5:11** And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom **we have now received the atonement**.*

To understand the “atonement” think of it as the “at-one-ment.” For that is exactly what it is. We are no longer enemies; we are at one with God. This is the third element of our justification.

To recap where we have come so far: we have been forgiven of all sins, we have the righteousness of Christ imputed to our account, and we have permanent ‘at-one-ment’ or atonement or reconciliation with God. Then in verses 12-21 Paul fills in the details of this last element of our justification.

***Romans 5:20** Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.²¹ That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so **grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord**.*

Paul said that just as sin reigned and had dominion over us before we put our faith in Christ as our all-sufficient Savior, now grace is going to reign and have dominion over us. Grace is the

most powerful tool in God's arsenal and for us "grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life." That is to say, when "grace reigns" we have been permanently made to be at one with God.

When we put our faith in Christ, God's grace is mightier on our behalf than sin. Before, grace was not working for us at all. Now, grace reigns. That is part of what was accomplished for us by Jesus Christ. As long as God's grace reigns, and it will eternally, we are justified unto eternal life. This is the sustaining power of God's grace to keep us in our justified status in Christ.

Notice how all of these are the *fix* for what ailed us in Adam. We were under sin, with no righteousness, and enemies of God. Those were the elements of our condemnation status in Adam. However, once we put our faith in Jesus Christ as our all-sufficient Savior, we have forgiveness, imputed righteousness, and we are permanently at-one with God. Moreover, this is only the beginning. We still have to look at the things that make up our sanctification and our exaltation.

God fixed our condition of being under sin by forgiving us all trespasses. God fixed our unrighteous condition by imputing the righteousness of Christ to us. God fixed our standing as enemies of God by putting us in a position whereby we are permanently at one with him. That completes our justification standing in Christ and is why we can now have "peace with God."

Romans 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

Our Sanctification Status in Christ

We have been looking at the changes that took place when we put on Christ. Our former offensive identification in Adam was erased and replaced with new things provided for us when we were baptized by the Spirit into Christ.

In the book of Romans, we are introduced to our justification in the first five chapters. In Romans 6 through 8, we have our sanctification being presented. Then, in chapters 9 through 11, we have the foundation for our exaltation (the dispensational change) but we do not get the details of it until we get to Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians.

Since we are studying our sanctification, we can go over to Romans 6-8 and learn what Paul says there. In our sanctification, we have had the elements of our abomination standing in Adam removed and replaced. Our former identification in Adam caused our actions to be an abomination before God. We were servants of sin, free from righteousness, and we walked according to the course of this world. Paul points these things out as a point of comparison as he begins to unveil who we are in Christ with regard to our sanctification. Remember that our sanctification makes us the holiness of God in Christ. This means that our actions will be of a different nature. To see this, we go to Romans 6.

Romans 6:22 *But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.*

There are several things to look at in that verse. First, we saw the elements that now make up our sanctified position in Christ. This would be that we are made “free from sin” and we are now “servants to God.” The result of this is that we have “fruit unto holiness.”

We can now bring forth fruit that God’s justice can accept because it is in perfect compatibility with his holiness. We have been made the holiness of God in Christ. This is why we can live unto God.

We see this same principle in 1 Thessalonians 4. Paul is giving the Thessalonians, who understand their identity in Christ, further exhortations. The context for what we are after in chapter four actually begins back in chapter three.

1 Thessalonians 3:11 *Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you. ...¹³ To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.*

Part of God’s purpose in saving us was to make us sinless just like Jesus Christ was sinless. Verse 13 said “to the end,” which is another way of saying, for the purpose of one day making us without sin (unblameable in holiness) in body, soul, and spirit. The reason we know this is because this is exactly what Paul says two chapters over.

1 Thessalonians 5:23 *And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Getting back to the passage, in 1 Thessalonians 3, why would Paul pray for us to be established “unblameable in holiness?” Because we have been made the holiness of God in Christ. Now let’s follow Paul as he continues on into chapter four.

1 Thessalonians 4:1 *Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.*

“Furthermore” told us that Paul was continuing with what we left off with in chapter three which was holiness. Then he said that they had ‘received ... how to walk and please God...’ They already knew the doctrine. Paul was exhorting them to “abound more and more.”

God gave us the sanctified position in Christ and now we are exhorted to walk in accordance with that in our daily lives. In other words, in view of who we have been made to be in Christ,

we are exhorted to live like who we now are. When we do that, we are bringing forth” fruit unto holiness.”

Romans 6:22 *But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.*

Now let us go back to 1 Thessalonians 4.

1 Thessalonians 4:3 *For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: ⁴ That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; ⁵ Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: ⁶ That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. ⁷ For **God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.** ⁸ He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who **hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.***

God has “called us unto holiness.” He did this when he sanctified us in Christ. He gave us the holy Spirit so that we can “walk in the Spirit” in a walk that is “holy” or in accordance with holiness.

Going back to the book of Romans, we are going to see Paul exhorting them after he had discussed with them who they were in Christ. In Romans 6-8 he had told them of their sanctified position in Christ. Later in Romans, Paul begins to exhort them in view of what he had educated them in. We are supposed to do what they were supposed to do: take the knowledge of who they had been made to be in Christ and walk consistent with that. This exhortation begins in Romans 12. As we look at the chapter notice the word “holy” or some form of it coming up.

Romans 12:1 *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*

Notice the “mercies of God.” This is not a vague reference to God’s mercy. This is not a general way of referring to God’s mercies, but this has in mind three specific mercies. Paul has already talked about God’s mercy with regard to being made the righteousness of God in our justification, the mercy of God in being made the holiness of God in our sanctification, and the mercy of God in being made the glory of God in our exaltation. These are the mercies that Paul is referring to. They are the context now for the exhortation he is about to give. He is asking them, in view of the mercies that were extended to them in their justification, their sanctification, and their exaltation that they do something. These are the mercies that Paul just taught them in Romans 1-11. It follows then, that chapter 12 would see Paul exhorting them in accordance with what they have just learned. He asks them to be the very thing that God has made them to be: a living

sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God. A living sacrifice is exactly who we have been made to be in Christ. That is why it is our “reasonable service.”

Note the word “holy” in the verse. That is with the idea of our sanctification in view. Therefore, it is very appropriate for Paul to say things just this way. Now let us return to Romans 6.

Romans 6:1 *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?² God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*

Now think for a moment where you are in Romans. In chapters 1-5, Paul has just established the fact of justification. We have seen that we are permanently at one with God and there is nothing we can ever do that will change that. There is no such thing as being ‘dis-justified’ or ‘re-condemned.’ You are stuck being justified and thank God for that.

Paul knows that knowledge of justification will cause some to think it does not matter how we live. Since we are permanently justified unto eternal life, we can live any way we want to and we are still saved. This is a doctrine known as *eternal security of the believer*. Many people do not want to accept this doctrine for a number of reasons. One of those reasons is the one we are discussing here. They think it is very unfair to be able to do what you want and still be saved. But when we understand our identity in Christ, we will not only understand that eternal security is not only true, but it is the correct motivation for living the Christian life. It is the basis on which we present our bodies a living sacrifice.

Up to this point, if you are reading through the book of Romans, and you discovered that when you received Christ you were permanently justified unto eternal life, and that there was nothing you could ever do to change that, then it would be a natural conclusion that God must not care about how you live your life. The truth of the matter is that, if all God ever did was justify you unto eternal life, it would not make one bit of difference to him how you lived. God would not care one way or the other – if all he did were to justify you unto eternal life.

But Paul is about to tell us in Romans 6-8 that God did not stop at justification. God did more than justify us unto eternal life.

It is true that we are going to live forever with God, but that is not the sum total of all that was given to us in our new identification in Christ. God not only justified us, he sanctified us. Moreover, because he sanctified us, it matters how we live.

The reason you and I ought to live a lifestyle that is pleasing to the Lord is not for the purpose of maintaining our justification. Our justification is a settled issue. If that is the reason you are living the Christian life then you are walking after the flesh and at the judgment seat of Christ will see every single work you have ever done burned up. Those works may be built upon the foundation of Jesus Christ, but they would be works of wood, hay, and stubble, and as a result,

they will be burned. Think what a waste to live an entire life, sincerely thinking you are doing the right thing, only to see it all go up in smoke at the bema seat!

1 Corinthians 3:11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² Now **if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;** ¹³ Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because **it shall be revealed by fire;** and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. ¹⁴ If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. ¹⁵ If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

The reason we are supposed to live in a way that is pleasing to him is because he has sanctified us. He has 'called us unto holiness.'

1 Thessalonians 4:7 For God hath not **called us** unto uncleanness, but **unto holiness.**

1 Thessalonians 4:3 For this is **the will of God, even your sanctification,** that ye should abstain from fornication:

It is God's will because he called us unto holiness. He called us unto holiness when he sanctified us. He sanctified us when we put our faith in Jesus Christ as our all-sufficient Savior. God did not just call us "unto eternal life" in connection with our justification.

1 Timothy 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on **eternal life, whereunto thou art also called,** and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

When we were presented the gospel, there was a call unto eternal life in connection with our being justified in Christ, and there was a call unto holiness in connection with our being sanctified in Christ. This is the motive for leading a life that pleases the Lord and it is the *only* reason for living it. It is the only doctrine that has the power to produce the Christian life.

That is the context of Romans 6 when Paul begins to introduce the doctrine of the sanctified life. There was more done for us than just being given eternal life through our justification.

Sanctification: Deadness

Romans 6:1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? ² God forbid. **How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?**

Paul now sets forth the first element of our sanctified position in Christ and we see it in verse 2. We are "dead to sin." That is a very different expression from being "dead in sin." Being "dead in sin" was the issue back in the first five chapters of Romans as Paul was detailing our

justification. We were dead in trespasses and sins and there was nothing we could do to change that. We were hopelessly guilty before the bar of God's justice and there was absolutely nothing we could do about it. That is the issue of being dead in trespasses and sins. We were "dead in sin" by nature.

Now in Romans 6:2, we have a different expression in that now we are "dead to sin." The Holy Spirit not only baptized us into an identification with Christ as far as his righteousness is concerned, but he also baptized us into the effective work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross when it came to dealing with the power of sin in our mortal bodies. In view of that, we are now dead to sin. Therefore, we no longer have to yield to the lusts of sin in our members. That is what happened when we were made dead to sin. It has to do with being free from sin being the master in our mortal bodies. As we will see Paul say later on, we do not have to let sin reign in our mortal body any more.

Romans 6:12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

We no longer have to yield ourselves as instruments unto sin but we can now yield ourselves unto God.

Romans 6:13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

The sanctified position we have in Christ gives us to the power to not let sin reign in our mortal body any longer. Now returning to the top of the chapter, Paul is going to give them the means by which all this was accomplished on their behalf.

Romans 6:3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? ⁴ Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

We are not only baptized into that which constitutes our justification, but we are also baptized into Christ's death, burial, and resurrection which gives us the benefits of what Christ accomplished in his victory over sin in the mortal body (in the flesh).

Sanctification: Aliveness

We are going to skip down here and observe Paul's exhortation as he puts the terminology together in just a couple of verses. After Paul has explained what was accomplished by Jesus on the cross for us and our identification with him, he is now going to say this to us:

Romans 6:11 *Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be **dead indeed unto sin**, but **alive unto God** through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

That gives us the first two elements of our sanctification in Christ. We are “dead to sin” and “alive unto God.” These are the benefits of being identified with Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection. We are now indeed dead unto sin and alive unto God. We now can have fruit unto holiness.

We are told to reckon ourselves to be this. That means we acknowledge that the thing is true and we count it to be true for ourselves. We can see this as it unfolds in Romans 6.

Romans 6:5 *For if we have been planted together **in the likeness of his death**, we shall be **also in the likeness of his resurrection**:⁶ Knowing this, that **our old man is crucified with him**, that the body of sin might be destroyed, **that henceforth we should not serve sin**.⁷ For **he that is dead is freed from sin**.⁸ Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:⁹ Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.¹⁰ For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.¹¹ Likewise **reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin**, but **alive unto God** through Jesus Christ our Lord.¹² **Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body**, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.¹³ Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but **yield yourselves unto God**, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.¹⁴ For **sin shall not have dominion over you**: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.*

Read the above passage carefully and not just the areas that have been put in bold type. These are the things that establish the truth of our sanctified standing in Christ. Because we shared in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, we are dead to sin and alive unto God. We no longer have to yield ourselves as servants to sin. The only power sin now has over us is the power we give it. Now let us continue in Romans 6.

Romans 6:19 *I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto **holiness**.*

Iniquity unto iniquity is how we used to live when we were in Adam. Now we can be servants to righteousness unto holiness.

We are going to pick up where we left off in Romans 6.

Romans 6:20 *For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.* ²¹ *What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.* ²² *But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.*

Verse 20 speaks of our former identification in Adam and then Paul asks what fruit we had in those things. Before, we could not bring forth fruit unto holiness because we were following the course of the world and we brought forth fruit unto Satan. Things changed when we received Jesus Christ as our all-sufficient Savior. Verse 22 said “but now,” in view of our being made free from sin and our now being servants of God, we have fruit unto holiness.

We have already run into the phrase “but now.” Back in Romans 1 through 3:20, Paul reviewed our former standing in Adam and that we were helplessly held by sin and we had no power of our own to free ourselves from its grasp. Then verse 21 comes along and says “but now” everything that we need is offered to us! Then he begins to explain our new identification in Christ with regard to our justification.

Romans 3:21 *But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;* ²² *Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and **upon all them that believe**: for there is no difference.* ²³ *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;* ²⁴ ***Being justified freely by his grace** through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:* ²⁵ *Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;* ²⁶ *To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and **the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.***

Sanctification: Sonship

There is still one more element to our sanctification in Jesus Christ. As you will see, it is the perfect antidote for our former standing in Adam.

Going back to Romans 6-8, we see God filling in the elements of our sanctification and dealing with the fact that we are no longer under the law but under grace. Then when we get over to chapter 8, we have the issue of God dealing with us as sons. That is the son-ship status of our adoption and it is the third element of our sanctification. Of course, we do not get the new body associated with that adoption until the blessed hope, but it is as sure as if it is already accomplished.

Romans 8:14 *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. ¹⁵ For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.*

Our Exaltation Status in Christ

Now we turn our attention to our being made the glory of God in Christ in our exaltation. We have seen this previously in Ephesians 2 as a reference. Now let us look at some detail.

Ephesians 2:4 *But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, ⁵ Even when we were dead in sins, hath **quicken**ed us together with **Christ**, (by grace ye are saved;)*

When we are quickened (made alive) then all that deadness we had in Adam is gone. We now have life with Christ in three particular ways under our exaltation standing.

Ephesians 2:6 *And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: ⁷ That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.*

This is the exaltation component of our new identification in Christ. This is the focus of the subject matter in Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians. In Philippians, the Father “hath highly exalted” his Son, and given him a name which is above every name.

Philippians 2:9 *Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:*

This exaltation of the Son is exactly what is going on in Ephesians 1, where the Father has put the Son far above all principality, power, might, and dominion.

Ephesians 1:20 *Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him **at his own right hand in the heavenly places**, ²¹ **Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: ²² And hath **put all things under his feet**, and gave him to be the **head over all things** to the church, ²³ Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.***

Then when we get into chapter 2, we are made to sit together with him in heavenly places; we have been exalted with him! Glory to God for the great privileges that he has extended to us. All of our alienation standing is gone and we now possess something new.

Now we are going over to Ephesians 2, where from verse 11 down to the end of the chapter, Paul is taking that “time past” issue of our being dead in the uncircumcision of our flesh and reminding us of former standing in Adam.

Ephesians 2:11 Wherefore remember, that ***ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;*** ¹² That ***at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:***

When the Holy Spirit baptized us into Christ the moment we put our faith in Jesus Christ as our all-sufficient Savior, that former identification that caused us *deadness* was done away, and now Paul says there is neither Jew nor Greek. Those old identifiers no longer apply to us as far as God is concerned.

Galatians 3:28 There is ***neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.***

Now returning to Ephesians 2, we are going to see what God replaced our old “Uncircumcision” standing with.

Exaltation: One New Man

Ephesians 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴ For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; ¹⁵ Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain ***one new man***, so making peace;

There is a lot to see here, but notice that now we have been made part of the “one new man.” That is the first element of our exaltation component in Christ. That is a new species of humanity, just as Paul described back in 1 Corinthians.

1 Corinthians 15:42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in ***incorruption***: ⁴³ It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in ***glory***: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in ***power***: ⁴⁴ It is sown a natural body; it is raised a ***spiritual body***. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. ... ⁴⁹ And as we have borne the image of the earthy, ***we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.***

Our new bodies are fit to exist in the heavenly places which is a foreign territory that men, by nature, cannot inhabit. We are a new species of humanity fit to function in the heavenly places for eternity. That is where we will carry out the business of the kingdom for the Lord Jesus Christ. Our glorified bodies will enable us to do this.

We are a new heavenly creature that has been given a citizenship in the heavenly places. That is a far cry from being twice-dead Gentiles. When you consider what God has done in our

justification and our sanctification and then you throw on what God has done with our exaltation, just as Colossians 1 describes, it almost defies imagination.

Colossians 1:12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

It is no wonder that Paul says this in the context of “giving thanks.” It is a huge jump to go from being ‘without hope and without God’ to being exalted together with Jesus Christ! That is what God had done for us in our exaltation in Christ. So the first element of our exaltation is that God has created a heavenly species of man in his Son: the one new man.

The second element of our exaltation in Christ we find in Colossians 1.

Colossians 1:12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: ¹³ Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

Exaltation: Citizenship

This is the remedy for our belonging to Satan, but there is more here than just that. Satan no longer possesses us and we are no longer citizens of his kingdom. We now have citizenship in Christ’s heavenly kingdom. Ephesians 1:3 was written to us with this in mind.

Ephesians 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: ⁴ According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

God’s plan and purpose for us is to have a citizenship in his heavenly kingdom. We have been blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. There is a constant well speaking of who we are in Christ. There is a constant making known of God’s plan and purpose for us in that heavenly realm to the discouragement of Satan’s principalities and powers.

Ephesians 1:20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: ²² And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,

Christ is exalted above all principalities, etc. as we saw in verse 21. Verse 22 said all things have been put under his feet and it is given to him to be the head over all things; then look, “to the church.” He had been given all that to us. That is, this is for our benefit that this is done. That is why we have verse 23, which describes us:

Ephesians 1:23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

Exaltation: Vocation

We are to occupy those places in his kingdom and be “his fullness.” This will happen when he reconciles all that to himself. Therefore, we have a heavenly vocation in Christ. That is the third element of our exaltation in Christ.

Instead of what we used to be, we now have the privilege of walking in accordance with who we have been made to be. That is what follows in Ephesians 4.

*Ephesians 4:1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of **the vocation** wherewith ye are called,*

We have the privilege of walking worthy of our heavenly vocation and making an impact to the honor and glory of God in those heavenly places. Ephesians 4-6 deals with the impact in detail but the first mention of it comes in chapter 3.

Ephesians 3:9 And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: ¹⁰ To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, ¹¹ According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:

God wants an impact made upon those principalities and powers in the heavenly places. God wants us to make some things known to them out of our understanding and our actions. That is why in Ephesians 6 we are told that we “wrestle” against them. They do not want the impact made and the strategy of evil in this dispensation of Gentile grace is to prevent us from making the impact.

We get the privilege, in view of being the justified, sanctified, exalted godly creatures we are in Christ, as members of the one new man, with the vocation we are given, to make an impact in that realm of the heavenly places. We make that impact right now while we are still living on this earth in connection with us being translated into the kingdom of God’s Son.

This is why our exaltation is our being made the glory of God in Christ, both now and in the ages to come. In our justification, we are made the righteousness of God in Christ. In our sanctification we are made the holiness of God in Christ.

There is another way to look at this. In our justification, we are going to live forever with God. In our sanctification, we can live unto God by doing those things which honor and please him. In

our exaltation, we can live for God right now to his glory and not for the adversary as we used to; hence, our exhortation in Ephesians 5.

***Ephesians 5:8** For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:*

We are exhorted to walk as the children of light that we have been made to be in Christ. In our next session we will examine the doctrine, concerning our identity in Christ, working in us that enables us to successfully live the Christian life. This is the subject of walking after the Spirit and not fulfilling the lusts of the flesh and how to accomplish it.

In Christ

Justification:

- Forgiveness
- Imputed righteousness
- Atonement (peace with God)

Sanctification:

- Dead to sin
- Alive unto God
- Adopted sons

Exaltation:

- One new man
- Citizen of Christ's kingdom
- Heavenly vocation

Note: Mike picks back up with notes here on video.

Relationship Prayer

The purpose of relationship prayer is to develop our sonship relationship with:

- God as our adoptive, heavenly Father, and
- us as his adopted sons and daughters.

Part one:

- Acknowledgement – we can identify two categories of things which form the basis of our relationship with God.
 1. The things which were given to us “in Christ.”
 2. The “glory” which is revealed in us by “Christ being formed in us.”

Part two:

- Understanding – we know what those things are about and can talk about them intelligently with our Father as they pertain to his purposes.
 1. His giving certain things to us “in Christ.”
 2. His accomplishing other things in us by “Christ in us.”

Part three: (Which is really the end result or goal of the first two parts.)

- Building the relationship – through this kind of praying, three things are accomplished in our inner man.
 1. Our love for him deepens and abounds, as we love him in more ways than before.
 2. Our increasing knowledge of him gives us a more intimate appreciation for who he is.
 3. Our gratitude is developed in us as we value and esteem what he has done for us.

Those three things become the basis for:

- Our service
 1. We serve him because we love him.
 2. We serve him because we know him; he is worthy of our service.
 3. We serve him out of gratitude.
- Our sacrifice (which is our reasonable service)

Category #2: Non-identity Mercies

- Liberty in Christ
- Freedom from fear motivation
- Freedom from the bondage of the law
- Freedom from the rudiments of the world
- Freedom from a strictly regulated *religious* lifestyle
- Freedom from governorship and limited decision-making
- The Spirit given to us
- Unlimited and unrestricted access to God
- The glory which shall be revealed in us

Future Exaltation Mercies

- The redemption of our body
- A heavenly vocation in the creature
- One new man
- Accepted in the Beloved
- Blessed with all Spiritual blessings

- An “heir of God” inheritance
- Joint-heir with Christ inheritance

“Christ in Us” Mercies (To be filled in a later session)

Space for personal reflection and notes

Space for personal reflection and notes