

Christ Already Reigns



Facing the Future (Part 4)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again as we continue to study together our exciting theme for this week "Facing the Future."

In my previous talks I've emphasized the importance of having a right attitude. I pointed out that the attitude with which we approach a given situation has a lot to do with what we actually experience in that situation, and I gave you the example of the optimist and the pessimist. I pointed out that the Bible gives us solid, objective grounds for facing the future as optimists. When we look at the scene of human history today, we don't say the glass is half empty, we say the glass is half full. In other words, up to this point all the purposes of God predicted in the Scripture have been fully worked out. This gives us objective grounds for believing that those predictions that have not yet been fulfilled will be fulfilled. The glass is being filled up, it's not being emptied out. Those that don't have the Bible viewpoint today, many of them are very pessimistic. They say time is running out, resources are running out, the situation is out of control, all sorts of things are going wrong. It just depends on our point of view.

Today I'm going to speak about the next main factor in forming a right attitude toward the future. This is the realization that Christ already reigns as King of the Universe and, furthermore, He will continue to reign forever. There's never going to be a time from now on till eternity when Christ is not on the throne of the universe.

Let's look at Ephesians 1:19-22. Paul is here trying to open the eyes of Christians to the tremendous, immeasurable power of God which is available toward us who believe and he speaks about "God's incomparably great power for us who believe." And then he takes a standard to measure the power of God available to us, as believers, in our lives and this is what he says, this is the standard by which we can measure the power of God.

> "That power is like the working of God's mighty strength which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms..."

So the same power that raised the dead body of Jesus from the tomb and exalted Him to the highest place in heaven is available to you and me who believe. Paul then goes on to depict the level of authority to which God has raised Jesus. He says He's:

> "...seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come."

So Christ is far above all other forms of rule or authority or power in the whole universe is not merely above them, He's far above them. He's above all rulers on the natural plane: kings, presidents, dictators, whatever we may wish to call them. One of His titles is Lord of Lords and King of Kings. I interpret that this way: He's the Ruler of all rulers and the Governor over all governors. That's on the natural, human plane. But the Bible also reveals that there are unseen authorities and powers in the spiritual realm that are evil, that are under Satan's control. In many places the New Testament speaks about principalities and powers or rulers and authorities with reference to the kind of power and authority that Satan would seek to exercise against us and against God's people and God's purposes. But though these are all real, and we have to reckon with them, we have to bear in mind continually that the power and authority bestowed by God upon Jesus is on a far higher level. It's above all human rulers and above all human government and all human authority; it's also above all unseen spiritual rulers and authorities in the unseen realm.

And then Paul says (and listen to this, it's good news):

> "God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church..."

Those last three words are tremendously important, "for the church." Jesus is there on our account. He's there to represent us. He's there to watch over us. He's there to insure that God's purposes and God's promises for us are unfailingly worked out; that no kind of Satanic or human opposition or hindrance can ever frustrate the promises and the purposes of God on our behalf. He is the head over everything for the church. How important to realize that! The church is the primary object of His care and concern and all His power and all His authority are exercised on our behalf.

Furthermore, not only is He there now but He's going to be there from now on and forever. Just one verse in 1 Corinthians 15:25, speaking about Jesus reigning it says:

> "For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet."

I think there's some people that are so occupied with antichrist and tribulation that they have a kind of impression that there's going to be a gap somewhere in the future in human history when Jesus will no longer be reigning. That's not true. He's reigning now and He's going to continue reigning until He has put all His enemies under His feet. No matter what happens on earth, Jesus is never going to abdicate that throne to which the Father has raised Him. He's there, He's going to continue to be there, and He's there primarily for the benefit of His people, the church.

Not merely has Jesus been exalted above all other forms of authority and power by the Father, but the revelation of Scripture takes us one important step further and it is this: Christ shares His authority with His people. This is unfolded by Paul in Ephesians 2:4-7:

> "But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions, it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus."

Paul there states three objective, historical facts based upon our relationship through faith with Jesus Christ; our identification through faith with Jesus. Because we have committed our lives to Jesus and made ourselves one with Him by faith, we are identified in everything that God did for Him from His crucifixion onward. And Paul, in these verses, specifies three things that God did for Christ that He has also done for us who are in Christ. In verse 5, Paul says, "God made us alive with Christ." In verse 6, Paul says, "God raised us up [or resurrected us] with Christ." But it doesn't stop there. He goes on to say in the same verse, "God seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus."

So, God has identified us with Christ in three respects: He's made us alive with Christ, He's raised us up with Christ (resurrected us), and He's seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus. What is Jesus seated on? He's seated on a throne. So, when we're seated with Him, we are enthroned with Him. So, we have these three successive phases of our identification with Jesus: we've been made alive with Him; we've been raised up or resurrected with Him; and we've been seated or enthroned with Him. We are

identified with Him; where He is, we are; He is seated far above all authority and power, we are seated with Him far above all authority and power; He rules, we rule with Him; not in the future but now.

The same truth about our sharing the throne with Christ is stated by Paul in Romans 5:17:

> "For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ."

So you see, when we're identified with Jesus Christ, we reign with Him in life. He reigns, we reign with Him. He's on the throne, we share the throne with Him. You see, there's a difference between Satan and Jesus. Satan is a despot; he just rules over everybody, he tyrannizes and dominates all. But when Jesus got to the throne, He didn't want to just dominate us, He wanted to share the throne with us. So we have to see ourselves now already sharing the throne with Christ. We've got to into the future with that attitude that we are on the throne with Jesus. It's so important that we realize who we are and only the Bible can show us that.

Well, our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this time. Tomorrow I'll be sharing with you how Christ has made continuous victory possible for us.

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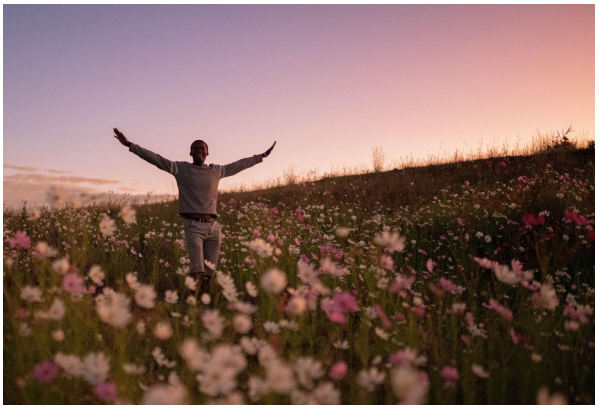
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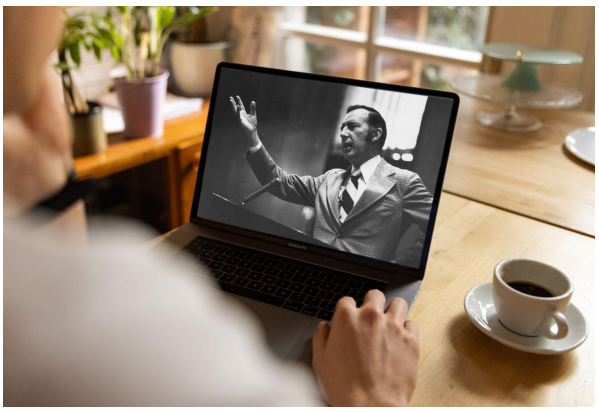
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