**The Basis of Forgiveness through Confession of Sin – BD04-02**

We continue this morning with the series of basic Bible doctrine studies. And we have learned thus far there was a wall which separated man from God, and that by the act of reconciliation, God removed that wall.

He removed it through the cross of Jesus Christ, a work of Christ on our behalf. There was once a matter of sin that separated us. God paid with the life of his son, and redeemed us out of the slave market of sin. We had the penalty of spiritual death, and because of our sin, God removed that by forgiving us our sin, through expiation.

There was a problem, that we have an old sin nature-so we were born physically alive but spiritually dead. He solved that by regenerating us, giving us a human spirit, whereby God contacts us. The character of God was such, His holiness as such, that this separated us. The justice of God, against our sin, was met with propitiation, that is satisfying justice-man’s against us. And the righteousness of God demanded perfect, absolute righteousness in us was met by imputation. We have imputed with the righteousness of Christ. And finally, we were born in Adam so that we were in a position of death and He removed us and put us in Christ, in the position of life.

So we have said, thus far, that God exists, and that he reveals Himself in a way that we can understand, and that He has a plan, and that that plan includes each of us. Now you will decide, of course, this morning, whether you want to get oriented to the plan of God, and whether you want to get involved, cooperatively, with God’s plan for your life or not.

Our role this morning is simply to communicate to you the revealed information of the word of God, and then we leave it with your responsibility to exercise your own volition as a priest of God, as to what you will do with it. However, if you will patiently listen during this series of basic doctrinal studies, we can assure you that you will have enough right information to know how to function in your priesthood and how to relate yourself to the plan that God has for your life. When you do this, your life will become meaningful, and you’ll find yourself enjoying God’s inner happiness, because this is what God desires to do, to share with you His perfect happiness.

**Spiritual Stalls**

Now we have learned that the old sin nature remains with the Christian after salvation and it causes the Christian to enter what we have called a “spiritual stall”. That is, where he is no longer flying, but where he is falling. A spiritual stall stops all progress in the plan of God for your life and you are declared to be in the position of a carnal Christian.

Now maximum capacity for understanding spiritual phenomena is going to be based on an attitude of mind, which results from the Holy Spirit controlling your life, which depends on your recovery from spiritual stalls. And that recovery technique we indicated was confession of that specific sin.

**Outside Evidence of Carnality**

Now the Bible gives us many evidences that this is true concerning the believer, that he continues with the old sin nature, and that at this problem of carnality is one that he faces all the days of his life. You remember that in 1 Corinthians 3, in the first 3 verses, we have a description of the evidence of carnality on the outside of the Christian. It is important that we understand this. Otherwise, you will be shocked by the things that Christians can do, by the wrong things that Christians can do. And you will cop out, with some explanation like “well, that person was never saved” or “he had a head knowledge, not a heart knowledge”.

And that isn’t true, because we come to an understanding of Christ through “a head knowledge.” There’s no difference. Now the sorriest and the best people in the world are Christians, and you need to understand that.

The carnal Christian acts like a spiritual baby. And you know what a baby is like. A baby wants attention, and he wants to be pursued, and he wants to be pleased. And that’s how some Christians within the local church are on the outside. You have the same evidence as you have in the Corinthian church here in 1 Corinthians 3, these first 3 verses, which describes the conduct of these people, which is “I want attention”. You have a Christian in your church and you don’t make over him- why, he walks out and says “that’s an unfriendly church”. And he goes and he finds someplace else, and he rotates from one church to another until he can find someplace that will compliment him enough. Some Christian brings a basket of flowers for the front of the auditorium, or gives a special offering for some cause, and if you don’t make note of it, he’s offended.

Some Christians show their carnality in their babyhood stage by the fact that they get big kicks out of seeing their name in the church bulletin. Others decry the fact that they have no social life, and they look to the local church to provide them with a social life. In general, they want the attention that somebody else is getting in the church, the prestige that somebody else is getting in the church, and they want to do what somebody else is doing in the church. One of the surest signs that you are in carnal, carnal babyhood stage of your spiritual development is the fact that you want attention, that you want to be made over, that you want to be lauded, that you want to be recognized. This is the babyhood stage.

**Inside Evidence of Carnality**

Other evidences of carnality are on the inside. If you move over to the book of Romans, chapter 7, the apostle Paul tells us what it’s like to have carnality evidenced on the inside of a Christian. Beginning in verse 14, Romans 7:14: “For we know that the law [that’s the law of Moses] is spiritual.”

This law was from God, and it expresses absolute righteousness. We Christians know that the Mosaic Law is spiritual, but Paul says “I am carnal. I am out of phase with the standards of God in my life.” Then he says “I am sold under sin”, which means “I am in bondage to sin.” This is in the Greek perfect tense, which means that this is a permanent factor of his life, the problem of being in bondage to the old sin nature. The word “sin” in the singular refers to the old sin nature.

Now here’s the great apostle Paul. He’s moving along his Christian life and he makes a declaration: “I know that what god tells me to do in His word is absolutely right, it’s spiritual, and I accept it. But, I find that I am carnal, I am in bondage to my own sin nature.”

**“What I Do”**

Now notice in verse 15 that there are, in translation, the word “do” occurs 3 times. But in the Greek Bible, it is very revealing that these-this word for do -each time is a different word. And it explains to us what is going on inside of us when we are carnal.

He says, “For that which I do”-and this word is “katergazomai.” And this word means “something on the inside working itself out.” So the first thing the apostle Paul says there about carnality is that it comes from inside and it works itself out.

For that which keeps on working out of me, I do not understand. For what I would, the things that I want, that do I not. Here’s the second ‘do’. And this ‘do’ is “prasso.” This word, “prasso,” means “to practice”. The things that are my habits.

Now, here’s this picture. I am frustrated by the fact that something keeps working itself from out of me from some source within me. Something down deep inside of me is coming, is causing practices, habits, performances to come out of me that I don’t want to do!

And then the last phrase, “but what I hate-the thing I really despise-that, I do.” And here is the last word for ‘do’, and this word is “poieo” in the Greek. And this is the only word for ‘do’ here. That’s what it means. This is the thing I do.

But in these 3 words, you see we have a picture of what carnality is like on the inside of a Christian. There’s a dominating defect that we take with us into salvation. So that you may translate this verse something like this: “for that which keeps on working out of me-that is, sins from the old sin nature when it’s in control-I do not understand. For what I desire that I do not practice. But what I hate, that’s what I’m doing.”

Well in time, as you go on through the book of Romans, you discover that the apostle Paul learned that there is a power for controlling the old sin nature, and that God, the Holy Spirit, is there to do it, there is a technique to recover from the point when the old sin nature takes control.

**Technique of Confession**

Now, there is strong negative volitions with this idea of confession. I’ve already been receiving it from several directions, on the reactions that some of you have received, and having some of the people listening to tapes on a particular subject. The average religious person and the average religious church is appalled by the idea of confession of sins as the spiritual stalls recovery technique.

I want you to turn with me this morning, as we begin, to turn our attention to the fact that there is a basis for this technique. I want to show you that there is a legitimate ground by which God can act upon this basis. Turn to 1 Corinthians 1. 1 Corinthians 1:2. The apostle Paul says unto the church of God, which is at Corinth. The church of God refers to believers who are in union with Jesus Christ, and who thereby compose the universal church. They are at Corinth, which refers to the fact that they are also in a local church, which is a physical part of the universal church. Then he says, “them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus”-the word “sanctified”, remember, means “set apart”-and this is in the perfect tense, so it means they are forever set apart in union with Christ Jesus. Sanctified, or set apart, in Him, they have a relationship that is eternal. They who have called upon the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, both theirs and ours.

**Inner and Outer Circle**

Now, let’s review our diagram again, that helps us to think this through. Here’s a circle, and this circle represents Jesus Christ. Now, at the point of your salvation, you enter this circle. And you enter that circle forever. And that’s why we say that this is eternal fellowship. This is a circle that you can never leave, once you have entered it. Now there is also a circle here in the, at the core-the inner circle. And this inner circle is your relationship to God in time. This is your temporal fellowship. This is the position of being spiritual. This is the position, out here, of being carnal. You enter this one by sin, you return by confession.

Now, that’s the basic picture. And it is very important that you understand this relationship. When we speak about a position in Jesus Christ, we’re talking about the fact that God has united you to the Son of God. And He has done it in such a way, the Bible describes from this perfect tense, that it can never again be undone. That’s the first thing we want to establish.

Now, the inner circle represents the way you walk with God in your daily life. It’s your temporal fellowship. And, you will be in and out of that circle as you move along through your daily experience.

**Two Kinds of Christians**

Now 1 Corinthians 3:1 teaches us that there are two kinds of Christians. He said “I couldn’t speak unto you as spiritual, but unto you as carnal.” Now, the spiritual Christian is the one that is in the inner circle of fellowship. The carnal Christian is the one who has left that inner circle. But you will notice that 1 Corinthians 1:2, in addressing these same Christians, in this church in Corinth, called them all saints. “Unto the church of God, which is at Corinth, that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints.” These people are all saints.

Now, you may have various views about your Christianity this morning. Some of you may be sitting here and thinking that you’re lost again. Some of you may say, “I have a very sorry Christian life.” You may be very dissatisfied with the way that you conduct your life as a Christian. Others of you may feel that you are very much on the godly side. Some Christians give themselves a higher rating because they are clean-living people.

But you see, this doesn’t mean much in reference to divine estimate, although it is important. An unbeliever can live just as clean a life as a Christian, and maybe better, but that is morality. That is not Christianity. And you may be a good Christian, or you may just be a self-deceived, self-righteous idiot this morning. But it’s not the issue before God. And in the basic course of doctrine like this, we’re going to try to orient you to what is important in God’s eyes in reference to the quality of your Christianity.

Many Christians, because they are discouraged with their Christian lives, because they don’t understand how to function under their personal priesthood, resort to all kinds of gimmicks to try to do something about it. And so they get themselves into a church where they can get in a lot of activity, and some kind of a program, and they go through certain stages to reach a certain standard, and then they discover and they’re still bored. Or maybe they respond with the solution of the satanic emotional delusion of speaking in tongues, or of the healing. People who are following that course find that they can get really emotionally high for a while, but then they have a spiritual hangover.

**The Old Sin Nature**

Now God provides you and me with happiness, He provides us with peace, and He provides us with the means to exercise genuine love. But we have to get right information to be able to do that. We’re dealing with a very vicious statement, this old sin nature-and this is the core of our troubles.

Just very briefly, to review it: we have learned about it. Believers possess an old sin nature after their salvation. The old sin nature is desperately wicked. Believers under the old sin nature’s control are called “carnal” or “fleshly”. The old sin nature frustrates good, divine instruction and the Christian way of life. We get an old sin nature from procreation, from our parents. The old sin nature produces sin and human good both. The old sin nature isn’t found in the resurrection body of believers.

**Christianity as a Relationship**

Now, this is the problem that we’re dealing with. But we who have this kind of a situation are united to Jesus Christ. And we are seated with Him at the right hand of God the Father in Heaven from the point of our salvation. So you see Christianity is not a matter of rituals and of customs and of activities, but it’s a matter of a relationship. Christianity is a relationship, not a religion. In a religion, man seeks to gain God’s approval and His blessings by his human works. In Christianity, a person has a relationship where God, The Holy Spirit, has entered him into union with Jesus Christ.

So we want to look this morning as to why this relationship in these two circles works. How is it that I, as a Christian, can leave this inner circle and not leave my salvation and that I can return? It all stems from our position in Christ. So we’re going to look in a little bit more detail as to what that is, position in Christ.

**Position in Christ**

First of all, question number one, how do you get in? How do you get in to Christ? The mechanics of this, we read here in 1 Corinthians that all believers are sanctified, whether they’re carnal or spiritual. They may all be in different stages of growth. Jesus Christ is in Heaven, we are on earth, but the moment we receive Him as Savior, something happens to us on the inside. Something very permanent takes place.

**Baptism into the Body of Christ**

You’ll read about that in 1 Corinthians 12:13. We read, “For by what spirit were we all baptized into one body?” All believers are baptized by God, the Holy Spirit, into the body of Christ. Verse 27: “Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.” Baptism means identification. The baptism of the Holy Spirit, let’s clarify from the very beginning, is not an experience.

I’ve been listening to the radio preachers recently. Some of our people would like to get us interested in some small segments of radio time. So I’ve been listening in, and I am appalled at the gobbledy-gook and the hogwash that’s put out on the radio programs. The invitations to receive the Holy Spirit through all kinds of fantastic, weird devices.

As a matter of fact, this precious truth about the baptism of the Holy Spirit is even being distorted in circles that ought to know better on the college level, organizations working with college students. My number two son told me that they had recently at Wheaton College heard a man that was head of such an organization. And there were red flags here and there that kept coming up in his mind, he didn’t know quite exactly why. And I told him that in the newspaper information sheet of this particular organization, they have now started printing how many college students received Christ as Savior in a certain school, in the work of their staff. And then it is also listing how many of them expressed a desire to be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

This is an extremely defective point of view, and it is satanic, for it defeats the stability and assurance of a Christian at the point of his relationship, his eternal, permanent relationship to Jesus Christ. There’s no end of troubles, of problems, that stem in the lives of people unless they understand this position in Christ. We get in because God, the Holy Spirit, baptizes us into it.

One of these radio preachers says when you’re baptized with the Holy Spirit, you’ll know it because you’ll start speaking in tongues. Nothing could be further from the truth; that’s a bald-faced lie. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is not an experience. You have no emotional reactions or response from it. It is received automatically by every Christian at the point of salvation. And it is the key to our union with Jesus Christ. The moment you believe, 1 Corinthians 12:13, declares that by that spirit, you are baptized into union with Jesus Christ. And don’t let anybody ever deceive you, no matter how powerful and how influential and how prestigious the organization may be. You will find false doctrine in the most appalling places.

**The Union of Jesus Christ**

Secondly, we get in with the baptism of the Holy Spirit, that’s the technique. This union is true of carnal and spiritual Christians. It is equally true of both. 1 Corinthians 1:2, you see already indicated that this was true. The background of the Corinthian church was very bad; this was perhaps the most carnal church in the New Testament, and it came out of a very, very wicked social background. And yet, these people in 1 Corinthians 1:2 are declared to be sanctified, set apart in Jesus Christ, and they are called saints: every one of them, the carnal and the spiritual alike. And they are called this, it says, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ, which is the same thing as saying faith in Jesus Christ, Acts 2:21, Acts 16:31. So “sanctified” and “saint” describe every Christian’s position with God, immaterial of how we walk. Sanctified, permanently. Saint, because of how you walk? No, because of who and what Jesus Christ is and what He has done.

So you see, the kind of Christian you are this morning is not the issue with God. Because the issue is what God did for you the moment of salvation. There were over 30 different things that happened to you in an instant when you believed in Christ as Savior. One of those things we’re talking about, being placed in Christ.

So positional truth is the basis, you see, for our circles. When I sin, because I am eternally united to Christ, it can’t break my Son-ship, but it does break my fellowship. It ruins my walk with God. God the Holy Spirit is grieved, He is quenched. I’m not leaning on Him, therefore He cannot direct me. Therefore, my life is in a spiritual stall, and I am going exactly no place. And until I come back, through confession of sin and get back into that inner circle, that’s where it stands all the days of my life. This is true because I am in position in Christ.

And unless people understand this, these folks that you explain this to, these people that you let listen to one of your tapes, they’re going to be appalled. Like one man from a great denomination said to one of our men, “well, the way he talks, all you’ve got to do is just sit on your backside and do nothing!”

And that’s a colloquial way of expressing it, but that’s about it, because God has done it, and not you. So quit complimenting yourself.

**The Result of Our Positional Relationship to Jesus Christ**

Furthermore, there are two main results from our positional relationship to Jesus Christ. One is eternal life. You have eternal life. 1 John 5:11, “and this is the record that God had given to us. Eternal life and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son, hath life. He that hath not the Son of God, hath not life.” Here again, it’s a relationship with the Son Jesus Christ, not a ritual. The day you entered union with him, you entered His eternal life.

Now, nobody can take this eternal life away from you. John 10:28 says no one can pluck you from the Father’s hand. Romans 8:38, 39, lists a series of different things, persons, humans, events-none of which can remove you. You notice in Romans 8:38 and 39, it includes angels. And the greatest angel of all, Satan, if he could remove you, he would. The Bible says he can’t.

Even God can’t remove you. Even God couldn’t remove you from this position in Christ, because He is immutable, He is unchangeable, He is absolutely just, and His justice has been met, has been satisfied. So instead, God’s power is actually the thing that is preserving you. 1 Peter 1:4, says “inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled, and that faded not away. Reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.” Who are kept by the power of God.

Now these poor people that run around constantly on edge because they’ve done something and they think they’re headed back for hell again, are the people who have not grasped the fact that we are kept in salvation by the power of God, and not by your human efforts. So stop insulting God, if that’s been your line of thought.

**Deceit in the Church**

All of these invitations that are so popular in churches today, for people to rededicate themselves, for people to come forward and reaffirm their faith, for people to stand up and stand with God, those are practically blasphemy. Because God isn’t going to give you anything more at that moment than He has already given you at the point of salvation. Because you are ignorant of the doctrine, you will be a sucker for that kind of professional preacher bait, and you will rise to it and snap on it, and pretty soon you will be standing and moving forward.

My son observed that the technique is tried in the Wheaton chapel on two occasions, and it bombed out both times, because there were enough students apparently who knew better than to respond to this kind of gimmickry. Now the professional revivalist that moves around doesn’t like this. He doesn’t like you to decry the fact of making public moves, of somehow something you can humanly do cannot be associated with what God has already done: the idea that if you’ll just come forward publicly, it will seal this in your mind. What kind of a boob-tubed idiot are you that you can’t believe God and understand what you’re told He has done for you? That if you do something publicly now it’s become significant to you.

And I read an article yesterday, one who was decrying the Doctor Louis Barry Chaffer of Dallas Seminary for the fact that Dallas men aren’t generally known for inviting revival, evangelists and revivalists in for a series of meetings.  And this well-known authority apparently hasn’t grasped the fact that Dallas Seminary people usually know enough doctrine and usually know enough that this is the thing to give people that the result is the people of God are out there doing the job of the ministry.  Dr. Chaffer, in his book True Evangelism has the remark that revival is abnormal.  You should’ve heard-you should’ve read-the articles that came out in furor over that remark when it was discovered.

What he meant was that if people of God understand their position in Christ and they understand the technique of confession of sin, they’ll always be in such a spiritual plane with God that they’ll be fully functioning and operating in their priesthood.  And you won’t have to have someone coming up with these devices and gimmicks.

One well-known evangelist years ago was in the church of Dallas.  Our boys’ band was invited to play, and so we-Dennis Williams may have been along, I don’t know-by the way, that was Mrs. Chan leading the choir this morning.  But Dennis may have been in that group, I don’t remember.  But we went to this very large church in Dallas and after the boys got through playing, we all sat on the first two row and I was on the end.  And this evangelist got up, and after he warmed the crowd up a little bit with a few stories about mother and her candle in the window.  Then he said “how many of you are Christians here?  I want you to stand up!”  And I was just sitting there, and out of the corner of my eye, I could see 15 heads go snap toward me.  Because they hadn’t been briefed on this, but they knew that something was wrong.  And we just sat there.

And boy, was he encouraged!  He thought “hot dog, I’ve got two rows of them down here in front to go to work on.  And here they are, playing in the church band too!  No wonder they don’t know all the notes.”

**God’s Work in You**

This is not how God works.  God does not invite you to come up with all your little devices and yet, if you don’t have doctrine being taught, what on earth is a preacher going to do?  How is he going to prove to you that he’s worth his salary?  How’s he going to prove it, except that he gets people to do something outside so that you can get a little emotional kick regularly to prove that he’s worth having around?  He plays the numbers racket to prove that he’s accomplishing God’s work on the basis of that statistics that he can share with you.

But if you’ve accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior, you don’t need any of that.  Because, I’m happy to tell you, there’s a very dramatic verse that lays it all on God’s shoulders and takes it completely off of yours, no matter how far you may go astray.  2 Timothy 2:13 says “if we believe not, yet he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself.”  If you believe not, yet he abideth faithful, even become an atheist, and you’ll still be saved.

**God’s Discipline**

Now, this is not to say that God does not discipline.  This is not to say that any Christian who’s out of that inner circle is not coming under the increasing barrage of God’s attention and pressures to bring him back in.  Because that’s exactly what he will do.

God Himself put you there, and he keeps you there.  So the godly Christian doesn’t have one bit more standing with God than the ungodly Christian does when it comes to positional truth.  There is no distinction; you under the grace of God.  So be careful when you stand up and you brag how much you have done for God and how mightily God has used you.  Because Christians are going to go out, and they’re going to compliment you.  They do that in church every morning, every Sunday morning, Sunday evening to the pastor.  They tell the pastor what a great sermon it was, and if he’s not careful, he gets to start believing it.  You may impress people, but I guarantee you, you will not impress God.

**Receiving the Righteousness of Jesus Christ**

So one of the great things we have is eternal life.  The other things we receive when we are united to Christ is imputed righteousness.  The imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ.  All of our righteousness, as Isaiah 64:6 says, is filthy rags.  We have no assets with which to pay God.  We begin life in debt to him, behold to God.  And 2 Corinthians 5:21 tells us that we receive His righteousness in place of our sin.  “For He hath made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”  With the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, our debt was wiped clean.  So God not only forgave, but He added all of His divine assets when He gave you the righteousness of Jesus Christ.  So you’re permanently in the black.  Union with Christ gives you this position.

Now don’t confuse this with experiential righteousness.  Just because you have the righteousness of Christ, again, doesn’t mean that you will act that way.  This comes from something we’re going to go in pretty deeply in the very near future.  Just briefly to remind you that while Jesus Christ before the cross, while He was moving through life, all of the forces of Satan were directed against Him.  He was target.  And what John 16 means when it tells us that the Holy Spirit convicts of sin, righteousness, and judgment, particularly the judgment of the Prince-that Satan has been judged, so the prince of the power of the air has been judged-is that the engagement between Christ and Satan on the cross was victorious.  Now, He is no longer the target.  Guess who is the target of every bit of Satan’s activity?  You.  And this is what we are talking about this morning in basic doctrinal ideas.

God has given you a way to prepare yourself to grow in spiritual structure of maturity, that you can defend yourself against this roaring lion, that his fiery darts will not affect you.  And you will not be borne into this.  You start off in the Christian life brand new and uninformed and a weakling.  But you have great potential, and it is only as you enter into the Word of God and into doctrinal understanding that you begin to find within you things are changing.  Your tastes change, your inclinations change, your desires change, and you are motivated in a way that is compatible with God’s plan for your life.

Now, this is a whole study in itself, that we’re going to get into, because some of you sitting here this morning have very shallow and very weak internal spiritual structures.  And you are bored to death, you are constantly plaguing yourself with what you are not and what you should be, you are constantly struggling to be something and you have not yet entered that real of real satisfaction, peace, and happiness, and exhilaration which is the life that is characteristic of those who know God and are in His family.

**The Protection of Our Union with Christ**

This union with Jesus Christ?  There’s another thing.  It protects every believer from judgment.  Protects from judgment in eternity.  There’s going to be a great white throne judgment, Revelation 20:11-15 tells us.  It’s the basis on which all unbelievers are going to be judged for their good works, which will not be enough.  So Romans 8:1 comforts us with the statement that we who are in the position of in Christ can never come into a judgment.  There’s now, therefore, no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus.

And please don’t come up to me after the service and say you didn’t read the rest of that verse, because the rest of that verse does not belong in there.  It’s interpreted.  It was picked up from the fourth verse and stuck up there by some scribe, because it doesn’t depend how you walk, after the flesh or after the Spirit, as to whether there’s no condemnation.  You can never come into judgment for your sin.  Why not?  Because you’re so good, because you’re trying?  Because you’re sincere?  No, because you are in Christ.

Our union with Jesus Christ also has an effect on election and on predestination.  Ephesians 1:3-5. “Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings and heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”  Everyone has full spiritual prosperity in Christ.  The father chose us to be saved.  Verse 4: “according to as he has chosen us in Him before that foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love. “  For some reason, the Father chose you and me for eternal life long before the world was created.  Verse 5 says “having predestinated us.”  God has predetermined us to a certain destiny, and that is the adoption of sons by Christ Jesus to Himself.  And you remember that the word “adoption” refers to the full adult privileges of the family of God.

**The Responsibility of All Christians**

I have to remind you that on the human realm, our children grow up and we tolerate certain things from them.  We say, “Well, they’re little kids.  It’s a little boy, it’s a little girl.”  But I want to remind you that in the Christian life, in reference to responsibility, there is no childhood stage.  The moment you’re born again, you stand before God with the responsibility of an adult son.  Now, it takes some learning and some development to know how to operate that responsibility, but you’re not waiting to receive anything more than what you have on the day of salvation.

In sixth place, union with Jesus Christ makes us a new creature.  We have already indicated that his does not mean you get some new habits.  2 Corinthians 5:17:“therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation.  Old things are passed away, and behold, all things are become new.”  The old things that have passed away are the old things of the wall separating us.  Things that have become new is the reconciliation that is now ours.  And all of this is new because of what God does for us.  You are not a new creature because you decided to have a better behavior pattern; it’s the grace of God, which is working and producing in us.  You were placed in Christ by God the Holy Spirit, so there is no credit to you, and everything that has followed is the result of your position.  That’s grace.

**Grace and Religion**

Religion is man doing the work to get God’s approval so God can bless him, trying to bribe God.  And it’s an agonizing system…  And it treats God with a witch doctor magic technique.  But God doesn’t need or want our help.  When it comes to our eternal security, and our salvation, He has provided it.  It’s very hard for many Christians to get used to this.  Grace orientation is one of the hardest things to achieve.  And we get negative reactions to the fact that God can be the One who has made it all complete for us.

But this is the security in the seventh place that union with Christ provides.  As we read in Romans 8:38-39, nothing can separate us from Him again.

So you’ll die one day, and some of you are going to be surprised to find yourselves in heaven, in spite of the fact that you believe.  It takes a little getting adjusted to the fact that that’s where we’re really going to be, and nobody can take you from this.

We share many things with Christ: His eternal life, His absolute righteousness, His election, His adoption, His sonship, His heirship, His priesthood, His eternal kingdom-all because the Holy Spirit baptized us into Him.

**Confession and Fellowship with God**

So let’s get back to where we started.  How can this little diagram work?  That confession of sin brings me back into my relationship of fellowship with God?  Because you never left union with Him, simply.  Now, you get out there in the carnal area, and you’re operating on human viewpoint, you’re producing human good.  But you’re still saved.  All you’ve left is your temporal fellowship with God, not your eternal fellowship.  That’s why 1 John 1:9 says “if we confess our sins”-and that “if” is the third class condition in Greek, which means maybe you will, maybe you won’t (it’s up to your volition to decide).

As many as confess have a forgiveness.  The word “confess” again remember is “homolegeo”, and that means to cite, to name the sin.  You wouldn’t confess it if you didn’t see it as sin, and how you feel about it is not the issue.  The issue is that 1 John 1:9 says God is faithful because He will do it every time, He’ll forgive every time- and He is just because He does this on the basis of the death of Christ.  And He cleanses us from all unrighteousness, which means that He covers the unknown sins.  All of this based upon the fact of our union with Christ.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1971