

New Life in Christ - Trouble Sitting

When we are introduced into this new life in Christ we must learn to put all of our faith and trust in Him. God has provided deep riches in Christ for everyone who truly trusts in Him.

Ephesians 2:4–5 NKJV But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

Ephesians 2:6–7 NKJV and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

God has provided a place of rest for us in Christ Jesus.

From the very beginning, God provided blessings as an act of His grace. He has demonstrated His grace and mercy throughout the Bible. It began with Adam and Eve in the garden. Before they were given the charge to care for the garden that God planted, they entered into God's Sabbath day of rest. Every blessing Adam and Eve received was a direct result of God's labor and favor. They entered into the finished work of God's goodness.

When Israel was brought out of Egypt's bondage, they were helpless to save themselves. In grace and power, they were brought out by God's mighty hand. They were amazed at God's power to save them from an enemy that was stronger and well equipped. In infinite wisdom and power, God provided a land of promise and told them that they would possess the gates of their enemies. God carried them into the land and showed them the bounty that He had prepared for them. When they did not believe, they were not able to enter into His rest.

God has provided a place of rest for everyone who will trust Him and obey.

Our God is a good, good Father.

Hebrews 4:3 NKJV For we who have believed do enter that rest...

Much has been provided in the rest that God has given us. Throughout history, God's people refused to enter into the blessing of God's provision. Israel rebelled in the wilderness and were not able to enter into the promise until a whole generation died in the wilderness. It is amazing that the promise of God still stood for any who would believe.

Hebrews 4:6 NKJV Since therefore it remains that some must enter it, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience,

Hebrews 4:9–11 NKJV There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His. Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall

according to the same example of disobedience.

God has made it possible for you to enter into His blessing through rest in Christ.

Since Jesus has passed through the heavens and has obtained a place of honor at the Father's right hand, you can come boldly to the throne of grace to obtain mercy and grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:14-16)

There is a practical component of this rest in Christ that every believer needs to find.

How do we find the help we need?

In Judges 6, the story of Gideon is a good illustration of this trust and rest. For seven years, Israel had been suffering from the attack of their enemies and everyone was afraid. When they planted their fields, their enemies would come and destroy everything and leave nothing behind. God's people hid in dens, caves and strongholds in the mountains from their adversaries.

When they cried out to the Lord, God sent a prophet who reminded them that He was the Lord their God, and they did not have to fear.

One day while Gideon was hiding from the enemy and threshing wheat in a winepress, the Angel of the Lord came and sat under the terebinth tree in Ophrah.

Judges 6:12-13 NKJV And the Angel of the Lord appeared to him, and said to him, "The Lord is with you, you mighty man of valor!" Then Gideon said, "If the Lord is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all His miracles which our fathers told us about?"

The Lord did not see things the way that Gideon was seeing things.

God had a plan for victory while Gideon was hiding at the winepress.

Judges 6:14 NKJV Then the Lord turned to him and said, "Go in this might of yours, and you shall save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. Have I not sent you?"

When God looks on your circumstances and situations, He has everything already worked out.

Gideon said, "*O my Lord, how can I save Israel?*" He was from the weakest clan in Manasseh and he was the least in his father's house.

Have you ever wondered how God could do what He said He would do?

God said, "*Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat the Midianites as if they were one man.*" God was saying, "*Trust Me, I have a plan.*" When everything seems to be going wrong and the adversary is fighting, you need to hear God say, "*I have everything in control.*" God had an assignment for Gideon that would bring victory for everyone in Israel. God said, "*Go out and*

tear down the altar to Baal and build an altar to God on top of the site and use the wood of the image to burn the sacrifice to the Lord.” Gideon thought the best time to do it was in the middle of the night.

In the morning, everyone in the city was enraged when they found the altar and image of Baal destroyed. The Midianites, Amalekites, and people of the East heard what had happened to their god Baal. All of Gideon’s enemies gathered together and prepared for war. When the enemy came out in strength, the Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet and 32,000 men of Israel’s came out to fight against Midian. Gideon was still overwhelmed with his own weakness and fears. He needed a sign from the Lord. It was new for him to trust in the Lord with all of his heart and step out in God’s strength.

After God confirmed His word, Gideon and all who camped with him arose to go toward the camp of Midian.

God had an issue with Gideon’s warriors and told him that 32,000 warriors was too many. So he sent 22,000 who were fearful and afraid home. Do you know that God knows what He is doing?

Then God said, “You still have too many.”

So he put them to the test and all but 300 were sent away.

When you don’t see how things can work out is the time you have to learn to sit down and rest in God.

Have you been diminished to a place where you cannot do it on your own? God wants His people to put their whole trust in Him. If we walk, work and win the battles in our own strength, God does not get the glory. Humanly, it feels good having 32,000 warriors standing with you. So, Gideon was down to 300 men.

“What do we do when we are reduced and all we have is trust in God?”

Judges 7:12 NKJV Now the Midianites and Amalekites, all the people of the East, were lying in the valley as numerous as locusts; and their camels were without number, as the sand by the seashore in multitude.

Have you ever told God, “I don’t have enough.” “How can I go into victory when my enemy has come against me in strength?”

You need to hear what the enemy is saying when you let the Lord God Almighty fight for you.

God told Gideon to go down into the enemies’ camp, and listen to what they are saying. So Gideon and one of his men snuck into the enemies’ camp and heard two men talking about their dreams. Everything they said was a testimony of the fear that God had put in their hearts. One of the Midianites said: “God has delivered us into Gideon’s hands.” All of Satan’s schemes and

devices have been put under the Lord's feet. Jesus Christ has defeated every principality and power and ruler of darkness.

Gideon returned to the camp of Israel knowing that he could trust God to give him victory.

God is not defeated when the enemy comes out against you with great numbers. God wanted Gideon to see the victory that was ahead.

Here is a battle plan.

Judges 7:15–16 NKJV Gideon said, "Arise, for the Lord has delivered the camp of Midian into your hand." Then he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put a trumpet into every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and torches inside the pitchers.

You cannot hold your sword and do what God wants you to do. The only way into victory was resting in God's ability to defeat their enemy.

Sitting is an attitude of rest and trust in God.

God knows how to bring you into victory.

King Jehoshaphat and the people of Judah faced a similar situation in 2 Chronicles 20.

A great multitude of their enemy came against them and everyone was paralyzed with fear. When they did not know what they were going to do, everyone in Judah came and stood before the Lord. When you don't know what to do, turn to the Lord. The Lord had a message for them in their time of distress. God said, "*Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's.*"

2 Chronicles 20:17 NKJV You will not need to fight in this battle. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, who is with you, O Judah and Jerusalem!' Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, for the Lord is with you."

You can sit down and trust in the Lord. Are you having trouble sitting down and trusting God with your situation? Are you still trying to work everything out in your own strength? You need to know that Jesus Christ has already gained the victory for you and He is sitting in a position of power. When He sat down at the Father's right hand, all principalities, powers and rulers of the darkness had been put under His feet.

Jesus has already conquered your greatest enemy.

He is in a position of rest, because He has won and your enemy has already been defeated.

Second, you have been invited to come and sit with Jesus.

There is a place of victory for you in Christ. The battle you are facing is not yours, it is God's. Turn it over to Jesus.