

Seated with Christ

a sermon in the series
Saved by His Life: Union with Christ

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Ephesians 2:4-6

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

The phone rings at your home and you answer. A strange voice says, “This is the White House operator, is this,” and they say your name.

“Yes, it is,” you say, while thinking, *Is this a practical joke or what?*

Then the person says, “The President wants to speak with you.” There’s a long wait and finally a voice comes on that you recognize, not because you’ve met him but because you’ve heard the President many times on the television.

“I need you in Washington D.C. I’ve researched and I believe you’re the right person for the job. I need someone to be a close advisor to me and I’m going to give you an office right next to the Oval Office. There will be none greater in my administration than you. You’ll be my most treasured and trusted advisor.”

No more than you hang up the phone, a knock comes at the door and men in blue suits with earpieces stand waiting for you to open the door. They introduce themselves as the Secret Service. They usher you into a black Cadillac limousine with the President’s insignia and you fly to D.C. You don’t enter through the portico or the normal doors of the White House, you enter through the entryway of the special staff and are ushered into the Oval Office where you meet the President of the United States. There he once again confirms what he’s offering you. He’s going to trust you more than he has any other advisor. You’re going to be the power behind the throne, so to speak, and you’ll have access to him 24/7. He will listen to your advice and will implement most of what you advise him.

Of course, this sounds so silly and fantastical that it’s hardly believable. And yet, One greater than the President, One better than any king or principality has invited you, not into the Oval Office, but into the throne room of heaven. There He has seated you and I in Christ Jesus where we are not the power behind the throne, but where the power of the throne is behind us. This is true.

This is what this text states about you and me and it is so because of our union with Jesus Christ.

I have illustrated this with one particular illustration throughout this sermon series. It's with a piece of paper and my Bible. The Scriptures say you and I are placed into Jesus Christ. So when I place a piece a paper in this Bible it means whatever is true about this Book is true about the paper. No matter what I do with this Book I do with the paper. If I hand my Bible to Geoff, I'm handing him the same piece of paper that's in this book. In effect, I'm giving him this paper. If I ship this Bible all the way to Paul and Velda in Zambia, Africa, the truth is I'm shipping the paper as well, because whatever is true about the book is true about the piece of paper because it's in the book.

The Bible says that you and I have been placed into Christ Jesus and whatever is true of Jesus Christ in His mediatorial and redemptive work for us is true about us. Whatever He has done for us is true about us. He died for us, therefore we died with Him. He rose again for us, therefore we rose again. The Bible says in our text that He has ascended into heaven and we have ascended with Him. He has been seated with God on the throne of heaven and so have you, because what's true about Jesus is true about you.

I. The Ascension and Exaltation of Christ

A. The New Testament's Emphasis on the Ascension and Exaltation of Christ.

The New Testament places an emphasis on this that unfortunately we today do not do. Perhaps we do not see the full impact of Jesus ascending to heaven and once coronated and invited by the Father to sit at His right hand on a throne in heaven. It seems only right to us that the eternal Son of God should be elevated back to the position He had before He came. That doesn't seem to be too far a stretch of logic, in fact, it makes perfect sense. But because of that we don't give it the attention it deserves. However, the New Testament writers who speak about it do it with a great deal of respect and awe. In fact, they make a big fuss about it. It was a big deal to them that Jesus ascended into heaven and was seated at the right hand of God.

They repeatedly refer to it. In fact, the Apostle Paul refers to it in the first chapter of Ephesians before He ever mentions that we're seated with Christ in the second chapter.

Which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. (Ephesians 1:20-21)

Go back to verse nineteen to find the answer of why He does this.

...and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power...

The raising of Jesus Christ is one of these events that is a part of the exceeding power of God working in you. That's why they make a big deal about it.

Peter makes it a significant portion of his Pentecost sermon:

Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear. For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: "The LORD said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.'" Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ. (Acts 2:33-36)

Why would he spend a portion of his sermon on this historical event of Jesus rising in the air? What was such a big deal about that?

For the writer of Hebrews, the Lord's ascension and exaltation to the throne is very huge. He makes reference to it multiple times. It must have been a very big deal because He repeatedly talks of it. Here are just a couple of the references:

Who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. (Hebrews 1:3)

But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God. (Hebrews 10:12)

There is a reason why the New Testament writers put such significance upon Jesus' bodily ascending and being bodily seated at the right hand of God in heaven. So let's look at that for a moment.

B. The Significance of the Ascension and Exaltation of Christ.

First, it is the validation of Christ the man. It validates the man Christ Jesus. This is very important to the New Testament apostles and prophets because this was the ascension and exaltation of a man. One of the reasons you and I don't put enough emphasis on the ascension and exaltation of Christ in our doctrine of salvation is because, once again, as I said earlier, it's logical. Why make a big deal about it? He came from heaven so it's logical He goes back. He is the eternal God, the second person of the Godhead, so if He came from there and sat upon it before He came, what's the big deal that He returned after He did His Father's will on earth.

This is why it's a big deal: A man sits on that throne today. Before Bethlehem there was no man on the throne of heaven. "This man, after He made the sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God." That's why it's a big deal. Jesus Christ, the son of Mary, the carpenter from Nazareth has been validated and rewarded and approved of by God the Father. Yes, He is God, we take nothing from His deity, but don't take anything away from His humanity either.

This Jesus was perfect before the Father and the Father brought Him into His own presence and said to all the angels of heaven, all the demons in hell, and all the inhabitants of the earth, “This is the One who is Lord of all, seated on the throne, the God-man.”

Why is this a big deal to me? Because humanity has been deified through Jesus. None of us will ever be deity, but we’re related to it. We are children of deity and our elder Brother, sits on heaven’s throne and is the authority thereof and so it should be a familiar place for us. We are flesh of His flesh, bone of His bone.

The ascension is significant also because it is the reward of Christ. This is His reward for His obedience of all the Father commanded Him.

And thirdly, it is the completion of Christ’s work of obedience.

*But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God.
(Hebrews 10:12)*

In Bible days, to sit down signified the completion of a task. Jesus has completed the task of our redemption as regards to His obedience to the Father on this earth. I say it particularly like this because there are things Jesus has yet to do for our redemption; He is our sanctifier, which is happening right now. He is the Redeemer of our bodies, which is yet to happen. But everything He needed to do on this earth to save us has been done, it’s finished, it’s completed and that’s why He has earned the throne of heaven and is told to sit down by God. In fact, Jesus will say the same to you and I one day. He already has, actually.

To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. (Revelation 3:21)

When that day comes, our task is finished. That’s the exaltation and ascension of Jesus Christ in a brief overview.

II. The Christian’s Co-Ascension and Co-Exaltation With Christ

I want to talk with you about your ascension and exaltation with Christ because I find this is one of the most amazing things ever said of a Christian in the entire Word of God. It’s one thing to be called a son of God, but another to be told we are already seated—present tense—in the heavenly realm in Christ Jesus. This is the greatest privilege of them all. Because of this, I believe we need to say more about it in order to understand it better. I want to first address it in a negative way and the rest will be positive.

To be ascended and exalted with Christ means:

A. The Christian is Not of the World.

And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which **you once walked according to the course of this world**, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience. (Ephesians 2:1-2 emphasis mine)

You and I were native to this place called earth to the system we call the world. This was home. This was our life and livelihood. All we knew was the realm of the nature of fallen men. But something has happened. What are the first two words in our text? “But God” has happened. God has intervened and rescued us from this world, and therefore, we are not of this world anymore. I know you know that theologically, but I want to suggest to you that unbelief of this truth is one of the biggest problems of Christians today.

I believe you can stem most of your difficulties to this very fact of not believing that you are seated with Christ on His throne right now. We tend to look at what we can see, with tunnel vision, all the struggles of life, all the difficulties, and that seems to shape what we believe to be true about us. We think, “I understand I’m seated in heavenly places in Christ, I understand because I’ve read that verse before, but I have no reality of that in my life. That doesn’t seem real. It’s about as far fetched as your story of the President calling me to be his most trusted advisor. It’s that unreal and unlikely to me.” And herein is your problem. When a believer understands who they are and where they are, they experience the reality of victory in Christ.

You’re not so different from the early church. It seems they had the same tendency to not believe it either, so you find the Gospel writers and apostles over and again reminding them. For example, Paul does so in Colossians:

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. (Colossians 3:1-3)

Why does he say those kinds of things? Because evidently the Colossians had forgotten or did not believe that they were seated in heavenly places in Christ. They were having difficulty believing that, so he reminds them. And what does he say to them? “If you’re raised with Christ, you are seated at the right hand of God. That’s where you are. That’s the realm in which you now live.” I know this is confusing because we think so literally, if not relationally and spatially. *How can I be seated in heaven but here with you?* I don’t know. But, again, it’s not we being physically, spatially seated in heaven. That is not the meaning because you’re physically seated right here. The point is you are in Christ, and Christ Jesus the man has ascended to heaven and He is the one on the throne, and because it’s true about Him it’s true about you. That’s why this is a big deal. You do not have to fantasize in your mind about being seated in heaven, forget that, in fact you must not do that.

All you need to know is that Jesus rules from heaven. The man Christ Jesus, who is also God, is seated at the right hand of God and because you are in Him you are therefore in heaven, even as you as here on this earth physically and spatially. *Set your mind on things above.* Here again is why we are so earthly-minded and not heavenly minded. We don’t believe we are there. Spiritually

this is the realm in which you now live: heaven. In fact, the text that we have sited here, verse six, “seated in heavenly places,” if you’ll notice in most of your Bibles the word *places* is italicized. This means it’s not in the original Greek. We are seated in the heavenly in Christ. The heavenly what? The heavenly realm.

In the Bible this is very important. Most Jews believed there were three heavens while some believe there were seven. Paul refers to this in 2 Corinthians 12 when he says he knew of a man who was caught up into the third heaven.

What does he mean by *third heaven*? Well it must mean there is a first heaven and a second heaven. The first heaven was the sky, the clouds, the atmosphere, where birds and planes fly. The second heaven was the universe, the outer space, where the stars and the suns and moons and other planets exist. And the third heaven is where God dwells. When Paul said he was caught up in the third heaven he means the heavenly realm. This is the realm in which we are invested in, but if I really believed that, wouldn’t you think I would be more interested in what is going on there than what is going on here? For most of us we are more interested in the affairs of this life here in the world.

The writers of the New Testament knew this about the saints—that we forget were are true citizenship resides. Listen to how Peter addresses believers about this.

Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul.
(1 Peter 2:11)

He begs. And why does he call them sojourners and pilgrims? Because Christians are aliens. This earth is not native to us any longer. Go back to Colossians one. Paul said to the Colossians, “For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God” When did we die? When you put your faith in Christ, you identified with His death on Calvary. You died, not only to your sin, but to the world. I’ve been crucified to the world and the world has been crucified to me. This is not my residency. I’m passing through. I’m a traveler, a sojourner. I’m not to put roots down here. Then why in the name of the Son of God, who gave Himself for you, do you put down roots here as if this is heaven? Because you don’t believe in the heavenly realm in which you live and now possess. We will never resign from this earth until we truly believe heaven is our home.

Why do Christians fear death? Perhaps it is because they have too much invested here.

Spurgeon once said, “Little faith will bring your soul to heaven; great faith will bring heaven to your soul.”

If we really believe we are with Christ and that our citizenship is in heaven above, then we will have heaven in our souls. This earth will not disturb a man or woman who has heaven in them. Do you have heaven in you? Are you heavenly minded?

Pastor, I've heard if I'm too heavenly minded I'm of no earthly good. No. Don't believe that. That's Satan's lie. It's a slogan right out of the pit of hell. Those who are the most heavenly minded are the most earthly good. How? You'll hear it in a few moments. Full, great faith believes heaven is where we live and dwell and have our being. It's amazing to me that Old Testament saints who didn't have this book and didn't know all that was to come to pass like we do could live more like pilgrims in this world than we.

*These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.
(Hebrews 11:13)*

This has to be our identity. This has to be my identity. If you've been watching the Olympics, have you found that when an American is involved you cheer for them and if they win, you are so elated, even if you've never heard their name before? I was watching one the other day when Ted Ligety won the gold medal for sliding down the hill (I could have slid down the hill real fast but he got a gold medal for it) and Karen and I were so excited that we high fived one another. Why? Because he's from our homeland. He's one of us. But the truth is, I increasingly feel less at home even in my beloved United States. Yes, our country is changing and changing rapidly, but that's not the reason I feel this increasing disconnect. It's because *I'm* changing. I'm seeing more and more that heaven is my citizenship. That's where I belong. That's where my investments are, and the more treasures I lay up there, the less appealing this place called earth looks to me. I confess to you that Jesus was right. Isn't that an astonishing thing to discover, that Jesus was right? The more investments you put in heaven the more you will think about it. The more you invest in others the more you'll be concerned about others. The less you invest in yourself the less you will think about you. Where your treasure is there your heart will be also. This is what our identity needs to be.

We do not need to ascend and be exalted on this earth, because of this blessed fact. This blessed fact frees me from trying to gain the approval of others and to be exalted in the eyes of others.

This is very practical. In every human being I'm addressing right now from the youngest person listening to the oldest, there is something in every one of us that wants to be acknowledged. It doesn't matter how introverted or extroverted you are—you want people to acknowledge you as someone significant. But the problem is, not everyone knows how significant we really are. My problem is that some people just don't understand how important I am. Do you have that problem too?

It is a blessed thought to know that in Jesus Christ I've already been approved and exalted, and not just exalted but seated in a place of great authority and power. Do you see how that can help me to not struggle when people don't seem to pay attention or give me the credit I think I'm due? In fact, can you see why I would not care so much about your approval but only care about what's going on in the throne room of heaven, because that's where I am because Somebody a whole lot more special says I am also special?

We need to believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ that says you've not only been forgiven of your sins and been made a new creation in Christ but you've ascended and been exalted to the right hand of God.

B. Christians Are Heaven's Ambassadors.

Our nationalities only define our ambassador status. I'm an ambassador to the US, but our true citizenship is in heaven.

We have entered a new realm. It is the realm of the reign of Christ. It is also a new age—the coming of the kingdom of God. We are wrong in our eschatology. We think the kingdom of God is yet to come. It's already come. Jesus said, "Repent for the kingdom of God is near." He didn't mean *near* as nearness in geographical location. He meant *near* as in *their presence* because He's the King of the kingdom, and wherever the King is, the kingdom is there also. He brought the kingdom with Him and He's establishing it in the hearts of men and women.

Therefore, dearly beloved, you are an ambassador of the kingdom of God. It is our responsibility as representatives to the throne of heaven to implement the Father's will now and bring the kingdom of God to pass, making ready for the King to return and establish it geographically and physically in this world. That is our duty. That is our task as ambassadors and it has begun. And because of God's act of love to raise and seat us on the throne with Christ, we do not have to work and strive to attain the same; it has already been done for me. Jesus has already accomplished that. We are already by His grace members of the kingdom. It is for us to believe this truth and allow the Spirit of Christ to work out our royal position in the world.

We are ambassadors of the King. We represent, not the powers of any nation, but the powers of Almighty God and His almighty kingdom.

I've told this before but I'm reminded of it again. On a trip to Romania we were in the capital city of Bucharest not far from the Parliament building, the government agency where everything happens. We were on one of the main corridors of that city of almost two million people, when all of the sudden some important dignitary was coming away from the Parliament building. The police motorcade pushed all the cars to either side so we had to move over. As the dignitary passed I said to my companions, "One day they will make room for us." Little did that important motorcade know that they passed by the representatives of heaven. One day when our King returns He will return, not by Himself, but with His ambassadors, who will rule and reign with Him.

How do we implement and practice our ambassadorship until then?

We operate under the authority of Christ and with His authority. We do not have authority in ourselves. It's not that God has given you authority and power and you can dispense it as you will. Now the Benny Hinns and the Joel Osteens prefer it that way and I understand why, but it's not biblical. An ambassador has no authority in himself. The only authority he has is when he ex-

ecutes what he is told from the President and Secretary of State. That is derivative authority. Our authority is derivative, meaning it originates and issues from another—the Lord Jesus Christ. We are seated with Him on His throne, not our throne.

Let me show you how this works. The Bible has given us an illustration of how your ambassadorship should work and it's found in Esther chapter eight. Let me get you up to speed at this point in the book. Esther is queen and Mordecai, the cousin that raised her, has been advising her of a plot to destroy the Jews by a man named Haman who was one of the closest advisors to King Ahasuerus. Haman had built gallows on which to hang Mordecai. He also had convinced the King that it would be good and solid government policy to order the execution of all Jews in the Medo-Persian Empire. Once gaining the king's approval, Haman sent out an edict that all the Jews on a certain day were to be killed. The subjects of the kingdom of the Medes and the Persians could kill any Jew. Haman was diabolically plotting the extermination of all Jews. Before there was ever a Hitler there was a Haman. When Queen Esther exposes Haman's plot to the King and that he would actually kill her, because she too was a Jew. The King didn't know his wife was a Jew, but she convinces the King of Haman's evil plot and the Bible says that Haman was hung on his own gallows.

That's where we are in the story, so let's read the text.

Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther and Mordecai the Jew, "Indeed, I have given Esther the house of Haman, and they have hanged him on the gallows because he tried to lay his hand on the Jews. You yourselves write a decree concerning the Jews, as you please, in the king's name, and seal it with the king's signet ring; for whatever is written in the king's name and sealed with the king's signet ring no one can revoke." So the king's scribes were called at that time, in the third month, which is the month of Sivan, on the twenty-third day; and it was written, according to all that Mordecai commanded, to the Jews, the satraps, the governors, and the princes of the provinces from India to Ethiopia, one hundred and twenty-seven provinces in all, to every province in its own script, to every people in their own language, and to the Jews in their own script and language. And he wrote in the name of King Ahasuerus, sealed it with the king's signet ring, and sent letters by couriers on horseback, riding on royal horses bred from swift steeds." (Esther 8:7-10)

Here's how your ambassadorship works. We have no authority in and of ourselves but when the King, who we are joined in union with, says something for us to do we do it in His name. When we do what He commands we have the authority and power of heaven behind us. When you speak for God, when you share your testimony, when you share the truth with a brother or sister, when you encourage them, you are to do it in the name of Jesus which means it's in the authority and power of heaven itself.

But how do I know what God wants me to do? Well, it's right here in His Word. He's given you the policy manual of the Kingdom. Live according to this Bible; operate your life according to this. When you do what you are supposed to do you will do so with the authority of heaven.

But I don't feel like I'm an ambassador. I don't feel God's power in my life. When the US ambassador to China goes and speaks to the supreme leader of China do you think he has to somehow feel the presence of the president in order to somehow speak with any authority? Of course not, that would be silly. He doesn't have to channel the president's presence or feel his presence in order to do what he commands him and neither do you. You may not feel the presence or the power or the authority of God but I tell you this Book says you are seated in Christ in the heavenly realm. You have that authority and power. Therefore, whatever you do for the Lord, do it with the belief that you have all of heaven's throne and power behind you. You need not be ashamed. You are His representative. That's why Peter says to the man who is lame at the gate called Beautiful,

Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. (Acts 3:6)

Why did he add *in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth*? He was evoking the power and authority of Christ. He was making all to know that it was not his authority, it was the authority of the King; Peter was just His ambassador.

Paul, writing to the Corinthians in the fifth chapter tells them to deal with a man who was impenitent, meaning he had not repented of his evil, terrible sin. Here's what he says to the church:

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. (1 Corinthians 5:4-5)

Most of us read this text and say that was back then but it doesn't apply to us right now. But it does. I have firsthand knowledge that it does. We are to bring the unrepentant under the discipline of Christ. Notice how the church is supposed to do it: *in the name of Jesus*. Just like with King Ahasuerus, the edict written was not the king's own words, but it was what he wanted. It was Mordecai's words, but Mordecai wrote them in the name of the king and therefore his words carried the authority of the king.

C. Christians Possess All They Need.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. (Ephesians 1:3)

You have everything you need for life and godliness. Do you know why I think Peter added *and godliness* in chapter one of second Peter? Because if he had said *you have everything pertaining to life* most of us would have said it meant eternal life and we would be thinking about heaven. He knew how people would think so he added the words *and godliness* to describe what he means by *life*. In other words, you have everything you need to live this life on this side of heaven in a way that is pleasing to God. You have everything you need on this side of heaven to survive and do God's will right now.

III. Experiencing the Reality of the Christian Position

How does this become a reality? Of course through faith, but there's one more requirement in order for us to wield the authority of the King of kings and Lord of lords. Jesus shows us what it is—humility.

Before Jesus went to the cross, He had to deny Himself of the right to be loved by people. Even by His own followers, who forsook Him. He denied Himself the right to be loved. How was He able to do that? The writer of Hebrews answers,

Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:2)

That joy caused Him to endure the cross, despising the shame, because there was nothing but shame in His death. He suffered the shame and the reproach of men, the shame and reproach of our sin, and the shame and reproach of God the Father. Then the writer of Hebrews tags this sentence, "and has set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Why does he add this? He's showing us that the way to exaltation is by humiliation. The way to be exalted in the kingdom is the opposite of the world.

In the world you have to do something, achieve something, and be somewhat arrogant, and promote yourself in order to be exalted. But Jesus said if you do that it might make you first on this earth but it will make you last in His kingdom. In His kingdom you become first by becoming last. Humiliation before exaltation.

I read the story of a twenty-six year old schoolteacher who had never been married. She said that when she was a little girl her parents had divorced and her mother had gone to live in a far away state while she had stayed with her father who was a physician. She said, "I spent my whole life trying to please that man. No matter what I did it wasn't good enough." She said, "I'd come home from school and try to prepare a nice meal and he'd get home and find something wrong with it. I'd spend all day Saturday cleaning the house and he'd come home finding something wrong. I've spent my whole life trying to get a few crumbs of love and acceptance from his table." Now, teaching school, but still unmarried she said, "I desperately want to be married and no one will marry me." Why not, she was asked? "When I start dating someone, I'm such a needy, grasping person that they can't stand the intensity of the relationship. I just smother them and I just want and want and want until they just can't satisfy me. She said, I even compromise myself in order to get my needs met. The leader of the group asked, "Have you given up all rights and surrendered yourself totally to the Lord, have you given up all rights to be loved by people? She said, "Why would God ask that of me?" She went into a corner of the room & started beating the walls with her fist saying, "why would God ask that of me, doesn't He know that's what I need more than anything else!" She struggled for a while, fighting a tremendous war with the Holy Spirit. Then she came and sat down saying, "You know, I have nothing to lose. This trying to get my needs

met my way hasn't worked. And she got on her knees, gave up all rights to be loved, trusting that Christ would meet her need for love and acceptance. A letter came to the leader a couple weeks later saying she was on the way home when God met her and He filled her with enough love for herself and enough to give away. In fact, she took her class of children out to the top of a hill and they slid down the hill on snow by the seat of her pants, laughing hysterically and the kids even came up to her at the bottom of the hill saying, "What's wrong with you, we've never seen you this way before." She said, "I've never experienced such freedom." Well, when Christ went to the cross, the Lord had to give up all rights to be loved. And then of course, God highly exalted him. You see, brokenness comes before the exaltation.

But brokenness does not come natural to you and me. We fight against it because we feel like it's a defeat to be broken. But God says it's the last victory before exaltation. Be broken.

For many of you, God is working in your lives but it's not what you want right now. You don't like what God is doing. You may not bang your head against the wall in public like this girl, but you may have beat your fists against the wall in private asking God 'Why? Why?' And His answer is, "Because I love you and I want to bless you! I want to exalt you but I want you to learn exaltation like my Son did: through brokenness." We must be broken before we are exalted. Why? Because without brokenness exaltation will destroy you. You cannot have that kind of power and authority working in your life until you've first been broken.

Therefore I don't need to insist on any right because I have all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus in the heavenly realm. I don't need anything because Jesus supplies it all. For those of you who are struggling because somebody in your life doesn't love you, doesn't care for you, is disrespectful to you or has hurt you, let me tell you if you are truly God's child you don't need that person. You already have the King and His approval and exaltation. You have already been exalted in Christ. Believe it and experience the freedom that His exaltation will give you. Amen.