

Our Glorious Position in Christ 1 Corinthians 1:1-9

Introduction:

1. Corinth was the capital of Greece, and a city with two harbors.
 - It was the center of commerce and entertainment for Greece and the whole known world. It has been called the “Paris of antiquity.”
 - Corinth was also a city that was synonymous with immorality.
2. The apostle Paul arrived on the scene in Acts 18:1 with the gospel of Jesus Christ.
 - God gave Paul spiritual fruit and open doors to start a local church.
vs. 4-11
3. With Corinth being such a lewd and wicked place, you can imagine the lifestyles that many of the Christians had come out of. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11
 - In fact, moral permissiveness, drunkenness, false doctrine, and carnality had crept into this church, and Paul is writing this letter to rebuke them.
4. Yet in verses 1-9, Paul very clearly reiterates where these believers were positionally:
 - Positionally, they were in Christ (1:2). Practically, they were carnal.
 - Christ is mentioned in every one of the first nine verses.
5. This was their true identity, but these Corinthians had failed to remember the glorious, exalted position they had been given in Christ, and their lives showed it.
6. Let’s look at this passage, and from it I want to remind each of us (that are saved) what our glorious position in Christ means.

First, in Christ we are sanctified. vs. 2

1. This means that these believers had been purified and set apart by God. Can you imagine this - being set apart **by** God and **for** God? This means that we are very special to God.
2. How did it happen? “...*in Christ Jesus.*” cf. 1:30
 - Christ has been made unto us sanctification. Christ **is** our sanctification.
 - If you are in Christ, you are as saved now as you will be a million years from now.
 - ...*to them that are* [present tense] *sanctified.*”

Second, in Christ we are called to be saints. vs. 2

1. The church is composed of saints. **Philippians 1:1**
 - The New Testament refers to believers as saints 63 times. In the Bible, saints are not football players from New Orleans, nor are they dead church heroes who have been honored by men because of their good deeds or religious works.
 - Paul wrote to **living** saints.

2. What is the basis of our status as saints? “...*them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus...*”
 - We do not become saints because of what we **do**; we become saints because of our position in Christ. Our status as saints is not performance-based, it is position-based.
 - You can break down all of mankind into two groups – the “ain’ts” and the “saints.” If you ain’t in Christ, then you ain’t a saint. It is that simple.
3. Believers will say, “I’m just an old sinner...” If you’re convinced that this is your identity, you will live this way. The truth is, you have a new identity. You are a saint of God in Christ Jesus. The old man (old identity) is dead, and you have been raised a new man in Christ Jesus. He didn’t improve your old man. He created you a new person!
4. Don’t be uncomfortable with being called a saint, because that is what God calls you. It doesn’t mean you live a sinless life, but rather that God has set you apart and placed the nature of Christ within you. You are a saint and you have Christ at the center of your being.

Third, in Christ we are recipients of God’s grace. vs. 3-4

1. The grace of God has been given to us. But why? We have sinned and rebelled against God, and violated His law countless times. On what basis would God give us His grace? We deserve judgment and condemnation. Verse 4 says, “...*by Jesus Christ.*” cf. Ephesians 2:1-5
2. These Corinthians had come from wicked, immoral, and sinful backgrounds, but now they are saints in Christ. How can you explain this? “...*the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ.*”
 - There wasn’t a whole lot that Paul could be thankful for in their lives on a practical level.
 - But, he was thankful for the grace of God that had saved them. What a lesson for us as we look at different people in the church! Don’t forget the grace of God.

Fourth, in Christ we are enriched. vs. 5-6

1. This word “*enriched*” means “to make wealthy.”
2. If you are in Christ, you are spiritually rich. Ephesians 1:3; 2 Corinthians 8:9
3. In Christ, we have obtained an inheritance (Ephesians 1:11). Our inheritance is not here on earth, but in the heavenlies. Ephesians 2:6-7
 - Israel’s is an **earthly** inheritance.
 - The church, the body of Christ, has a **heavenly** inheritance.
cf. Colossians 1:5
4. This is why it doesn’t make sense for a believer today to live for the things of this earth and store up earthly treasure. Our blessings and wealth are in the heavenlies. Everything down here will pass away. Colossians 3:1-2

Fifth, in Christ we are called into Christ's fellowship. vs. 7-9

1. If you are in Christ, this means that you have been called into an intimate relationship with Christ.
2. Christ is totally committed to this relationship with you.
 - He is coming back for you personally and will confirm you blameless before God, so that you can spend all eternity with Him. What a calling!
3. The Christian life is not primarily about a **work**. It is about a **walk** with the best friend you have ever had – Jesus Christ.
 - Our good works are an overflow of our relationship with Him.
4. He desires to walk and talk with you every day. He has called you into His fellowship!

In Conclusion:

1. Are you in Christ today? Have you trusted Christ as your Savior?
2. There is no safer place to be than to be in Christ.
3. But, every person is either in Christ, or still in his sins. How does God view you today?