

PRECEPTS FOR LIFE

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SERIES: Life In The Spirit

TITLE: Program 11 – Position: So Much ... In Christ!

MONDAY

OPEN

Do you feel like you just cannot overcome these desires that are within you that you know that are not of God? Do you think there's no hope? There's no way I'll ever be set free. Oh, Beloved, there is hope and there is a way and this is what life in the Spirit is all about. Life in the Spirit is you being able to be what you ought to be and to please God in every way.

PART ONE

Position is so key; I mean being in the right position at the right time. It's key in sports. It's key in business, it's key, and it's key in Christianity. It is so important for you Beloved, to understand who you are in Christ, what your position is in Jesus Christ. And this is what life in the Spirit is all about. Now in our last program we were looking at Ephesians. So what I want us to do is, I want us to go to Ephesians, chapter 1 and I want us to see the process of getting the Holy Spirit in us, and then what that position of the Holy Spirit

in us accomplishes for us. So let's go to Ephesians, chapter 1; Ephesians, chapter 1. I love this chapter because it is written without a period, it is written without a pause. It is a eulogy. It opens with, "Blessed be the Lord and God of our Father, the Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places, just as He, God, chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and blameless before Him in love." (Ephesians 1:3-4) And it goes on and on and on and finally it comes down to verse 13 and it says, "In Him," in Christ and this is a key phrase in the book of Ephesians. It's a phrase that you would want to mark if you're going to read through the book of Ephesians. And sometime we'll study it together. But it says, "In Him you also, after listening to the message of truth." Now here's a time phrase. So it's, "you also, after you listened to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation." What is that message of truth that you heard? It's the good news of your salvation. "Having also believed, you were sealed in Him, in Christ with the Holy Spirit of promise." (Ephesians 1:13) Many times when you read Paul's epistles, you'll hear the promise, the promise, the promise. We know what that means. If you've been studying with me from the beginning of this series of life in the Spirit, you know what it means. You know that the Holy Spirit was promised. You know that the Holy Spirit has come. You know what happened when He came. You know what happened when He came to Jews, what happened when He came to Gentiles. I mean you know. Isn't that wonderful? You know, and if you say "I don't know and I wish I had known," well then just go to preceptsforlife.com and there you can connect with us and you can find out how to get this whole series, how to go through and how to mark your Bible. But I want you to see what he's saying here now in the process of salvation. So he says, "In Him you also, after listening to the message of truth, having also believed you were sealed in Him, in Christ with the Holy Spirit of promise." Watch what he says. You hear, you believe, you're sealed and then he says, "... with the Holy Spirit of promise who is given as a pledge or as a guarantee of our inheritance with a view to the redemption of God's own possession to the praise of His glory."

(Ephesians 1:13-14) You say, whoa, wait a minute. Wait a minute. What did you just say? Well, I just read to you verse 14, which is describing who the Holy Spirit is. So you're sealed with the Holy Spirit. So that sealing with the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit is given to you as a pledge, as a guarantee. Or to put it another way, as a ticket, or as a seal, that someday God is going to redeem this purchase possession. When God saved you, He bought you body, soul and spirit. And that's why when Paul writes to the Thessalonians he keeps saying, "I pray that your body, soul and spirit be preserved blameless until the coming of our Lord." (1 Thessalonians 5:23) He bought you. He moved inside of you, but also He purchased you. And when He purchased you, it means that He is going to take this body and this corruptible is going to put on incorruptible. This mortal is going to put on immortality. And so he's saying, "... who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession."

(Ephesians 1:14) All right now, watch, because I am sealed with the Holy Spirit, when I die then the Holy Spirit is the guarantee that I'm going to be admitted into heaven. The Holy Spirit is my ticket into heaven. The Holy Spirit is the One who says "Okay, this mortal is going to put on immortality." You're going to have a brand new body. Someday you're going to walk in a body like Jesus Christ had when He was raised from the dead. Remember if you read the end of the gospel of John, the disciples are all in a room and all of a sudden Jesus comes in, but He does not open the door. He just walks right on through. So we're going to have a new, redeemed body. So you got the picture. Number 1: You hear the gospel. Number 2: You believe in your heart. Number 3: You are sealed with the Holy Spirit. That's the process that happens: hear, believe, sealed. Now knowing that helps you as you give the gospel and as you watch God work in a person's life. All right now when that happens, what happens to me spiritually? Well, I want us to go to Romans, chapter 8, Romans 8. It's an awesome, awesome chapter. And in Romans 8, what you would want to do is you would want to mark every reference to the Holy Spirit. And then you would want to mark every reference to the flesh because what he's going to

do, he's gonna contrast, listen carefully, those that are in the flesh, those that are the natural man, that has fallen, the image of God is distorted. He is a sinner, he is lost, he is dying, he is going to hell. He can't do anything. He has no power. He is dead in his trespasses and sins, as we saw sometime back. Then you have the other person who is according to the Spirit. The Spirit of God is inside that person. So what Romans 8 does is Romans 8, at the beginning of the chapter contrasts those that are in the flesh and those that are in the Spirit. So you would want to mark both of those. And then when you finish, just take a piece of paper and list everything that you learn about those that are according to the flesh and those that are according to the Spirit; according to means "under the domination of." Now watch what he says. In Romans, chapter 6 he has explained to them that when Jesus Christ died they died with Him. When Jesus Christ was buried, they were buried with Him. When Jesus Christ was raised to walk in newness of life, they were raised to walk in newness of life also. (See Romans 6:3-4) Then Paul also explains in Romans, chapter 7 the Christian's relationship to the law, that all the law could do was show us our sin; that the law could not make us righteous. And so he's showing now that you are no longer married to Mr. Law, instead you are married to Christ. All right now we've come to Romans 8 and we come to a conclusion. When you see a "therefore" in the scriptures, ask what the therefore is there for, because it's a term of conclusion. And so you want to spot those. Now when I'm marking my Bible, I mark therefore with three red dots in the shape of a triangle. And that's my symbol for therefore. Chapter 8, verse 1: "There is therefore ...," three red dots, "... now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." (Romans 8:1) Now remember in Ephesians 1 we saw that we are in Him, that we are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. So he's saying there's no condemnation to those that are in Christ Jesus. Isn't that awesome? You can never be condemned. You can never be condemned. Man can come along and condemn you, but not God, and if God is for you, who can be against you. So better to be condemned by man, but not to be condemned by God. Why is there no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus? "For the

law,” or the principle , now he’s not talking Ten Commandments. He’s talking about principle. “For the law ...,” like the, the law of gravity, you know. The law of gravity is a principle of gravity. All right so he says, “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law,” or the principle, “of sin and death.” (Romans 8:2) In other words, the lost man can only live in sin. The lost man is dead in his trespasses and sins. But when Christ comes in, then Christ in you overcomes the law of sin and death. In other words, hey, you’re no longer a sinner. You are no longer a slave to sin. He establishes that in Romans, chapter 6. You’re no longer a slave to sin. Romans 7, you’re no longer under the condemnation of the law. Why? Because the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death. In other words the law of the Spirit enables you to overcome the law of sin and death. Let me just show you this in an illustration. I love it when we fly, and many, many times I’ll be doing work, I’ll be reading something and take-off time will come. And I love take-off time. I just kinda sit back, look out the window if I’m sitting next to the window and just enjoy that “vroom,” that surge of power. And as it comes I’m reminded of life in the Spirit. Does the law of gravity still exist? Yes, the law of gravity still exists, but it is overcome by the power of the Spirit. Listen, this is the position we’re talking about and we’ll look at it more right after this break.

PART TWO

I’m so glad that you’re back, Beloved. Now let’s get back into Romans, chapter 8, verse 3. “For what the law could not do” the law said be righteous, the law said be holy, the law said do this, do that, but the law could not make me holy. It could only tell me how. It did not give me the “vroom,” the power to be holy. So “... what the law could not do, weak as it was ...,” now watch this carefully, “... weak as it was through the flesh.” In other words, the law was speaking to the flesh. And the law was saying do this, do this and do this, and the flesh was just so weak. And because the

flesh was so weak, the flesh couldn't measure up to the law. So "... what the law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh..." not a sinner, but in the likeness of sinful flesh and, "... as an offering for sin..." because when Jesus Christ hung on that cross, Jesus, who knew no sin, was made to be sin for you and me. God took all of your sins and God took all of my sins and God placed them upon Jesus Christ, and because He placed 'em upon Jesus Christ and Jesus was made sin for us, then He took care of our sin. So watch what it says. "Sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh." (Romans 8:3) He put it to death in order that, this is the reason: in order that "the requirement of the Law", here's the law with its standard, "might be fulfilled in us ...," now watch, "... who do not walk according to the flesh," the flesh is impotent to keep the law, "but according to the Spirit." (Romans 8:4) So now the Spirit of God inside of us enables us to keep the requirement of the law. It enables us to measure up to what the law is all about. Let's look at it again. "In order that the requirement ...," verse 4, of Romans 8, "... of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk..." and here's that phrase, "... according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit." (Romans 8:4) So you want to mark Spirit there. And then listen to what he says in verse 5. "For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh." In other words, they're just fleshly thinking because they're not in tune or connected with God. "But those who are according to the Spirit put their mind on the things of the Spirit." (Romans 8:5) In other words, now they're interested in true spiritual things. There're many people in this world that are interested in "the spiritual" and you find them putting little shrines and altars in their home and going through all sorts of experiences trying to connect with the spiritual self. They do yoga and things like that. He's not talking about that. He's talking about the one and only true Spirit and that is the Spirit of God. And so he says that those who are according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. "For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life ...," now catch this, "... peace." (Romans 8:6)

There's peace. See, I have a peace in my life, even in the midst of trials, because I know God, because I have the Spirit, because I have the mind of God through that. We'll look at that later. It's part of my position. But because I have those things, then I have peace. I know who's in charge. I know who's running this universe. I know the Person to whom I belong, and I am fully convinced that He is able to keep everything that I've given Him, to guard it until that day when I am absent from this body and I am present with the Lord, when this mortal has put on immortality, when He redeems this purchased possession. I've got life and I've got peace. "Because ...," verse 7, "... the mind set on the flesh is hostile towards God ..." it turns its back against God. And it says, "... for it does not subject itself to the law of God." Here's the law of God and it's saying "Obey me," and it's not doing it; it doesn't care. And so it says, But "the mind set on the flesh is hostile towards God, for it does not subject itself to the law of God," and you know what? "It's not able to do so." (Romans 8:7) It is dead. It is lifeless. "And those who are in the flesh," without the Spirit, just their bodies and not the Spirit of God in 'em, those that are in the flesh "cannot please God."

(Romans 8: 8) Doesn't matter what they do. Doesn't matter how they try: Because they don't have the Spirit of God inside of them, they cannot please God. Now, let's go to verse 9. He says, "However, you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you." So here's the contrast, you're not in the flesh, but you're in the Spirit if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now watch what he says and you want to mark every reference to the Spirit. "But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." (Romans 8:9) You do not belong to God. So when you believe, when you're baptized with the Holy Spirit, then you are in Christ. No Spirit: no salvation. So what's the position? The position to be in Christ is to have the Holy Spirit in you. And he goes on to say this: "And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin." (Romans 8:10) In other words, some day this body is going to have to be put off. And it's dead because of sin. So this mortal has to die physically, but it's going to be raised immortal. So watch what he says. If the corruptible is going to put on incorruption,

that's in 1 Corinthians 15. But let me just show you this. "And if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the Spirit is alive because of righteousness." (Romans 8:10) Verse 11: "But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you" So that's the question. Does the Spirit of God dwell in you? If the Spirit of God, is in you, "who raised Jesus Christ from the dead," He who raised Christ from the dead "will also give life to your mortal body through the Holy Spirit who indwells you." (Romans 8:11) Remember we saw in Ephesians 1, we are sealed with the Holy Spirit until the day of our redemption. And the Holy Spirit is the guarantee of the redemption of this mortal body. It goes on to say, "So then brethren; we are under obligation, not to the flesh." (Romans 8:12) When your flesh cries out "give me, give me, give me what I cry for," you need to say "unh, unh, I'm not under obligation to you because I'm walking in the Spirit." So he says, "So then beloved, we are under obligation not according to the flesh, not to the flesh to live according to the flesh, for ...," and he's gonna warn 'em again, "... if you are living according to the flesh you must," you must, "die;" he says, "but if by the Spirit ...," now this is your position, if by the Spirit, "you are putting to death the desires of the body, the deeds of the body" (Romans 8:12-13) In other words, look, your position of Christ in you enables you to live life on a higher plane. It enables you to live not according to your flesh, but according to the Spirit. This is your position in Christ. And this is what enables you to be holy even as God is holy. This is life in the Spirit, Beloved. And you know what? When you live according to the flesh, you get up the next day or you turn around the next minute and you go: yuk, yuk, why did I do that? You say well, can a Christian ever do anything according to the flesh? Oh come on, you know that, don't you? If you've been around me you've seen me do things according to the flesh, but it's not my lifestyle, it's not my habit, because Christ is in me and I'm in Christ. You say I wanna know more about that, and we're going to look at it in the programs to come, Beloved.