

Lesson 25 – The Standing and State of the Believer

When we were saved, we were justified – made perfectly sinless in Christ. If that's the case, why don't we live perfect sinless lives? What is the relationship to current State of our lives to our Standing in Christ?

The moment of our New Birth, God imputed His righteousness to us through the Lord Jesus Christ. We became new creatures in Christ. By receiving God's salvation, we were fully qualified to go to Heaven. He could have taken us to Heaven immediately, but He kept us here for a reason. He kept us here so that we could become a part of His great plan for reaching the world for Christ.



When we became new creatures in Christ, we were just beginning the Christian life. Regardless of our religious affiliation at the time – regardless of the amount of religious training or devotion we had, we were just starting in our new life in Christ, and we had a lot of growing to do. In fact, we all still have a lot of growing to do.

in the Christian life, you never outgrow your need for growth.

1. Definitions

- a. *Standing* – how we stand before God, justified with the imputed righteousness of Christ. Our standing is perfect because we stand in the righteousness of Christ.
- b. *State* – The current state of affairs in our Christian walk. We are not sinless, of course. If we are serious about our relationship with Christ, our goal will be for our *State* to reflect our *Standing* as much as possible.

2. Our Standing in Christ Compared With Our State

- a. Our Standing has to do with who we are in Christ; our State has to do with who we are today in the world, and what God wants to make of us.
- b. Our Standing fully qualifies us for Heaven; our State is our day-to-day walk with Jesus in this present world.
- c. Our Standing is perfect in Christ; our State is imperfect – with the goal of perfection. (We will never be perfect in this life, but as we grow in the Lord, we will be getting closer to the goal).
- d. Our Standing is in Christ alone; our State is Christ in us.

3. Our Standing – Who we are in Christ

- a. We are in Christ – 1 Cor. 1:30
- b. There is no condemnation for us – Rom. 8:1
- c. We have the righteousness of Christ – 2 Cor. 5:21
- d. We are accepted in the Beloved – Eph. 1:6
- e. We are partakers of the Holy Spirit – 1 Cor. 6:19
- f. We have redemption and forgiveness of sins – Col. 1:14
- g. We are called to be saints – 1 Cor. 1:2
- h. We are perfect in Him – Eph. 5:27
- i. We are declared to be citizens of Heaven – Phil. 3:20

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Lesson 24 – The Standing and State of the Believer

- j. We are Priests of God – Heb. 10:10-14
- k. We are Royalty in God's Kingdom – 2 Pet. 1:11
- 4. Our State – Who we are in the world**
 - a. We are to be growing
 - i. Starting as babes in Christ – 1 Pet. 2:2
 - ii. We are go grow in grace – 2 Pet. 3:18
 - iii. God wants us to become mature – Heb. 5:11-14
 - 1. Marks of maturity
 - a. Sufficient spiritual knowledge and stability to be teachers of the Word of God – Heb. 5:12
 - b. Progressed beyond the point of needing someone to teach the beginning principles of the Christian life – Heb. 5:12
 - c. Skilled in the word of righteousness (able to study, understand and teach the Word of God) – Heb. 5:13
 - i. We are not self-centered, like a baby
 - ii. We are self-developing so that we can be centered on Christ and focused on ministering to others – 2 Cor. 5:15
 - d. Able to understand the solid food – more advanced teachings – of the Word of God – Heb. 5:14
 - e. Experience in making choices of good over evil in the Christian life – Heb. 5:14
 - f. Able to discern between that which is good and that which is evil through experience – Heb. 5:14
 - 2. How long should it take to be this mature?
 - a. Jesus spent 3 years maturing the apostles.
 - b. After 3 years He left – and He left the work to them.
 - c. It was a good plan – we are here today because of the work the apostles and their trainees carried out.
 - b. We are to be victorious in the battles that all Christians face
 - i. The world – 1 John 2:15
 - 1. The wisdom of the world is faulty
 - 2. The wisdom of this world will lead you away from God
 - 3. Be not conformed to the world – Rom. 12:1-2
 - a. Don't follow what the world wants you to do
 - b. Do not lower your standards to accept the values of the world
 - c. Be transformed from following the influence of the world
 - d. Allow God to renew your mind
 - i. Through studying the Word of God
 - ii. Through obeying the Word of God
 - iii. Through yielding to the Spirit of God
 - 4. If Jesus is your Lord, you will follow Him without question – Luke 6:46
 - ii. The flesh – 1 John 2:16
 - 1. The lust of the flesh – sexual sins
 - a. Avoid tempting situations - flee them – 2 Tim 1:22

Lesson 24 – The Standing and State of the Believer

- b. Don't feed your mind with literature, music, TV shows or movies that promote lustful thoughts or actions (Your mind is not a garbage can)! – Phil. 4:8
- c. If a person or a picture causes you to think lustful thoughts, don't look! – Matt. 5:28
- 2. The lust of the eyes
 - a. This is another kind of lust – the lust for material things – things you can see with your eyes. – Psalm 101:3
 - b. The sin of Achan – Josh. 7:21
Remember, when the Israelites took Jericho, they were commanded not to take anything from the city. Achan sinned by taking some of the spoil. When he was caught, he confessed that...
 - i. He **saw** a beautiful garment, some gold and some silver. He was tempted to sin.
 - ii. He then **coveted** them. He thought about what he saw, thereby allowing the temptation to grow stronger.
 - iii. Then he **took** them, succumbing to the temptation.
- 3. The pride of life
 - a. Pride is subtle. Most proud people don't know they're proud.
 - b.
- iii. The devil
 - 1. The devil wants to tempt you into any sin he can
 - 2. Some of the more direct temptations of Satan to snare you
 - a. Horoscopes
 - b. Fortune tellers and psychics
 - c. Unscriptural spiritual experiences
 - d. False religion – specifically any religion that does not clearly teach the saving Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - i. Liberal Protestantism
 - ii. Liberal Baptists
 - iii. Roman Catholicism
 - iv. Cults
 - v. Other religions
 - e. Compromise with false religions
 - i. Accepting them as though they were brothers in Christ
 - ii. Cooperating with them in Inter-faith prayer meetings, crusades, etc.
 - iii. It is not compromise to love them, to care about them, and to seek to lead them to Christ
 - 3. The devil wants to get you to sin anyway he can.
 - a. Do not give place to the devil – Eph. 4:27
- c. We are to grow in holiness (sanctification)
 - i. Definition: to be set apart for God
 - 1. Set apart from the world
 - 2. Set apart to God

Lesson 24 – The Standing and State of the Believer

- ii. We are not called to uncleanness, but to holiness – 1 Thess. 4:7
- iii. We are to perfect holiness in the fear of God – 2 Cor. 7:1
- iv. Our sanctification is the will of God – 1 Thess. 4:3
- d. We are to deal with sin in our lives – 1 John 1:7-9
 - i. Confession – *homologeō*- to say the same thing, by implication, *to agree*.
 - 1. Agree that the thing you did was sin, and that it displeased God
 - 2. Agree that you should not have done it
 - 3. Agree that you should not do it again
 - 4. Agree that, with God’s help, you will not do it again
 - 5. Ask God for forgiveness.
 - ii. Result of confessing sin
 - 1. You will be forgiven – 1 John 1:9
 - 2. You will have joy – 1 John 1:4
 - 3. Fellowship will be restored – 1 John 1:5
 - 4. The joy of your salvation will be restored – Psalm 51:12

For the most part, we, as the Church, have lost the power to make a dynamic impact for Christ on our communities. As a result, we are being marginalized by society. 100 years ago, we were Mainstream America. Today we are merely “the Religious Right.” A large part of that has to do with the fact that our lives are no different from unbelievers. Christians drink, cuss, go to dirty movies in the theater just like lost people. They don’t believe us because our lives don’t look any different from theirs. As ambassadors of Christ, we should be the happiest, kindest, the friendliest, the most honest, and the most dependable people in the world.

Our *State* is nowhere close to our *Standing*, and we are content to follow the world – and to follow Jesus afar off. God is looking for people who will commit themselves to follow Jesus 100%. When our *State* begins to reflect our *Standing*, our lives will be obviously very different from the lives of the world. We will have the joy of the Lord, a very high standard of honesty, decency and morality. Our words of witness to the lost will be much more powerful because our lives and the lives of the believers they know.