

REVISITING THE BELIEVER'S POSITIONAL RICHES IN CHRIST
Part XII: Applying The Truth That Believers Are Brought Near To God

I. Introduction

- A. A great need that many people express today is that of a spiritual thirst to "feel connected to God," to have "spirituality" or "something more" that they see is missing in their "inner person."
- B. As depicted in Lewis S. Chafer's Systematic Theology, vol. III, "Soteriology," p. 246-247, this need for spiritual intimacy with God is addressed the instant one trusts in Christ as Savior, and we view this positional truth for practical application toward enjoying fulfillment in one's relationship with the Lord in his experience:

II. Applying The Truth That Believers Are Brought Near To God.

- A. When one trusts in Christ as his personal Savior from sin, he is *positionally* placed by God "in Christ," a phrase that implies great divine blessing for the believer, Ephesians 2:4-5, 8-10.
- B. One result of being "in Christ" is that one is *positionally* "made nigh" to God (KJV), that is, he is "brought near" to God as the ESV describes it in Ephesians 2:13; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, fn. to Ephesians 2:13.
- C. To appreciate this *positional* truth, we view Ephesians 2:13 in its **context** (as follows):
 - 1. To understand in what sense one is "brought near" to God, we note Paul's description of the alienation from God that one faces prior to his salvation as described in the context of Ephesians 2:1-3, 11-12:
 - a. Before salvation, one belongs to the eternally doomed kingdom of Satan, Ephesians 2:1-2.
 - b. Before salvation, one indulges in sinful lusts of the mind and body as doomed to hell, Ephesians 2:3.
 - c. Before salvation, one is alienated from Christ, from others who believe in God and (as Gentiles) from God's chosen people, the people who are the seed of Abraham, Ephesians 2:11-12b.
 - d. Before salvation, one is without hope and is alienated from God the Father, Ephesians 2:12c.
 - 2. However, in contrast to his pre-salvation state, the believer "in Christ" enjoys spiritual unity and intimacy with other godly people and with God Himself (as follows), Ephesians 2:13-22 et al.:
 - a. To offset the alienation of being a Gentile from God's chosen people, the seed of Abraham, God through Christ's cross broke down the barrier between the two to make of them both a new kind of man, a Christian, and this occurs when Jews or Gentiles believe in Christ as Savior, Ephesians 2:13, 14-17.
 - b. To offset the alienation they had known from God Himself, God establishes a variety of spiritual connections between the new believer, Himself and other Christians (as follows):
 - i. God gives the believer His Spirit, God the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3-4), Ephesians 2:13, 18a.
 - ii. The Holy Spirit gives him access to communicating with and relating to the Father, Eph. 2:13, 18b.
 - iii. Romans 8:15 reveals the Holy Spirit equips the believer to address God the Father as "Abba," a child's intimate word for "Daddy," so He gives an awareness of one's being a child of the Father!
 - iv. If every other believer is thus "connected" to the Father as His child, the connection between God and the believer works in a network with every other true believer, forming a brotherhood, Eph. 2:13, 19. [Paul's "therefore" that starts verse 19 (KJV) unites verse 19 with verse 18, so due to the Spirit's giving us all who trust in Christ individual access to the Father (v. 18), we also have mutual access to one another in a spiritual fellowship of a spiritual brotherhood (v. 19)!]
 - v. This brotherhood network runs very deep: the believer is connected in a fellowship with the twelve apostles of Christ, with every other believer in Him who has lived since the Church began in Acts 2 as well as with every other believer around the world who has since then lived or still lives.
 - vi. God spiritually equips every believer with a supernatural gift of service that makes him needed by every other believer, a further aid to "connectivity" in our experience of service, 1 Cor. 12:8-27.
- D. However, to **enjoy fellowship** with God and with other believers in our *experience*, we must "walk in the light as He is in the light" (1 John 1:7), that is, order our lives in alignment with the revealed "light" of God's Word, the Scriptures (Isaiah 8:20-9:2) by relying on the Holy Spirit, Galatians 5:16. Failure to do this alienates one from the true fellowship of God and His godly saints, what is behind the "emptiness" that many believers face.

Lesson: (1) *If one realizes he is "disconnected from God," he should trust in Christ for salvation and God will instantly "connect" him to Himself and every other Christian in the positional realm.* (2) *However, to enjoy the application of this "connectivity" in our walk, we must obey Scripture in the Spirit's power, Gal. 5:16; 1 Jn. 1:6-9.*

Application: *May we (1) believe in Christ to be positionally "connected" to God and all other true believers, but may we also (2) heed God's Word in the Spirit's power to enjoy the application of this "connectivity" in our walk.*