

Sit Walk Stand – Progressing to Spiritual Maturity
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Last week I preached a message entitled “Don’t Just Do Something... Stand There.” Part of my teaching came from Psalm 1:1-3, which says:

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the path of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on His law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.

Notice the downward progression here. First – the person walks with the ungodly. Then he stops and stands with them. And ultimately, he sits with them and joins in with them. The Amplified version says it this way:

Blessed is the man who walks and lives not in the counsel of the ungodly [following their advice, their plans and purposes], nor stands [submissive and inactive] in the path where sinners walk, nor sits down [to relax and rest] where the scornful [and the mockers] gather.

So – the walking here represents following the ways of evil men rather than the ways of God. Standing is a passive act of submitting to the enemy rather than actively fighting him. Sitting is coming to the place where you are actually at rest – at home – in the presence of sin.

Now the other Scripture God brought to my mind was the book of Ephesians that has a different and opposite message.

Ephesians can be divided into three main sections.
 The first 3 chapters deal with our position in Christ.
 Chapters 4 and 5 deal with our daily life in the world.
 And chapter 6 deals with our warfare with Satan.

The Key Verses from Ephesians are:

Ephesians 2:6 - *We are seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.*

Ephesians 4:1 - *Walk worthy of the calling to which you were called.*

Ephesians 6:11 - *Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil.*

The progression in Ephesians is very different than Psalm 1. This progression is an upward progression and it follows this order: Sit – Walk - Stand.

Not Walk – Stand – Sit.

Not Sit – Stand – Walk.

But Sit – Walk - Stand.

I'm preaching today a message called Sit, Walk, Stand. I read a great book by this title years ago by Watchman Nee and I highly recommend it! To progress to maturity as believers, we must understand and walk in these truths.

Ephesians begins by showing us our position in Christ, which we find in Ephesians 1:3-8:

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight. In love He predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will—to the praise of His glorious grace, which He has freely given us in the One He loves. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that He lavished on us.

Positional truth shows us who we are in Christ. We are in Him – so wherever He is – Positionally, we are there also. So – where is He? Ephesians 1:18-21 tells us:

I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which He has called you, the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints, and His incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of His mighty strength, which He exerted in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.

This shows us where Christ is. He is seated at the right hand of God in heaven. So – where are we? Ephesians 2:6-7 says:

And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages He might show the incomparable riches of His grace, expressed in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

We are seated with Christ in heavenly realms – that is our position. The first thing we must do as Christians is sit!

Not do – but sit.

Not work – but sit.

Not walk – but sit.

What does sitting mean? When we sit down – we take a load off – we don't carry our own weight, but we rest it on a chair. Most of the time when you are sitting your body is at rest.

Paul shows us that as Christians we start our journey with Christ by sitting – by learning to rest in Christ. By resting our whole weight – ourselves, our future, everything – on Christ.

How can we do that when there is so much for us to do? The fact is God has done everything for us already, so we can sit. We must first be IN Christ before we can do anything FOR Christ!

Christianity does not begin with a big DO – but a big DONE! Christ said from the cross “it is finished” and so many Christians live their lives trying to add to what He has already done.

We don't receive Christ by working for it or by walking right!
 We receive Him by faith which means we rest in what He did!
 Our works and our walk flow out of our position in Christ – they do not put us into that position!

Think about this – God created the world in six days and on the seventh day He rested. That was the first Sabbath. And God made sure that He created man last on the sixth day. So, God's seventh day was man's first full day. Adam began his life with the Sabbath. It was a day of rest.

God had already done everything and then He rested and so did man. How does this apply to us? God has already done everything we need in Christ. God worked and then He rested – but we must learn to rest *in* Christ before we work *for* Christ. The work is done. It was finished when Jesus arose from the grave and ascended into heaven where He is doing what? Sitting!

And we can sit with Him because we are His sons and daughters and we are in Him. The Christian life starts with sitting. It begins with His finished work. We can sit with God; we can find our rest in Him because He has done the work for us. That's why Hebrews 4:9-11 says:

There remains, then, a Sabbath — rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from His. Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest.

The King James says to labor to enter into rest. In other words – our first work as Christians is to learn to rest in Christ. We must learn to sit before we can walk. Too many people skip the sitting and go right into the walking. We have to sit first. Then we can walk. If we reverse the order – it always results in disaster.

The Christian life begins with sitting – with rest. But it does not stop there. It is followed by walking.

Sitting describes our position in Christ in the heavenlies. Walking describes the practical outworking of that heavenly position here on earth.

People mess up when they only teach positional truth. That truth must always be walked out and worked out. Too many Christians have right doctrine, but the way they live contradicts what they say they believe!

To have Christian doctrine without Christ-like living is a contradiction! Works without faith are dead works, but faith without works is also dead! That's why Philippians 2:12-13 says:

Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.

This does not say work for salvation. You can't do enough good works to save yourself. You are saved by grace through faith and that salvation that God works in us must be worked out by us into our daily walk. But until God works it in us – it is useless for us to try to walk it out and work it out.

For instance – we are commanded to love everyone, but some people are hard to love! As hard as you try – you can't work up love for them. You pray hard before you meet with them, but you still lose it on them!

Were you wrong in asking for love from God? NO. But you are wrong when you ask for love as if it is something that God gives you apart from Himself! What God wants to do is love that person through you!

God has given us everything in Christ! He is our wisdom, our righteousness, our sanctification, our redemption. And He is our love, peace and joy! Those are not things we receive apart from Him!

Jesus is all those things in us, for us and through us to others! We can't work those things up! We work out in our lives what Christ Himself already is in us. We rest in Him – then we walk and work! To walk is to go. It is an action it is what we do. It is the progress we make. It is going and it is doing.

The word walk is used eight times in Ephesians. For instance:

Ephesians 2:10 - *For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*

Ephesians 4:1 - *Walk worthy of the calling with which you were called.*

Ephesians 5:2 - *Walk in love.*

Ephesians 5:8 - *Walk as children of light.*

We are His workmanship and now we are to walk in His ways. When we rest in Christ – then - We can walk in faith. We can walk in victory. We can walk in holiness. We sit with Christ in order to be able to walk rightly with people.

And all of that is only possible when - We walk in the power of His Spirit. And when we walk – we never leave the place of rest. When we leave the place of resting in Christ – we get tripped up in life.

That's why the secret to the Christ walk is learning to sit first. Walking determines the course of life.

It is the picture of someone who is advancing, step by step like an army to the battle lines going after the victory that is promised to us.

If we can sit and then walk we will see the fruit of the Spirit grow in our lives. Once we get our walk right, then we are able to: Stand.

Sitting speaks of our position of rest in Christ in heavenly places. Walking speaks of how we live our lives on earth. Standing speaks of our conflict with Satan.

The Christian life begins with sitting and leads to walking, but it does not end there! We have an enemy who wants to steal, kill and destroy – so we must learn how to sit with Christ in heavenly places, walk in holiness and stand against the devil.

No Christian can wage spiritual warfare without first resting in the finished work of Jesus Christ! The Bible plainly teaches that Jesus defeated and disarmed Satan through the cross. Jesus has authority over Satan and He delegated that authority to us!

As I taught last week – the word “stand” means to “hold your ground, to maintain a fixed position.”

In times of war – armies march into other countries to take ground and occupy territories.

But God does not tell us to march – He says to stand!

Why is that?

Because Jesus has already defeated the enemy and gained ground.

His resurrection proves He is victorious over all the realms of spiritual darkness. And the ground Christ has won, has been given to us! That’s what we mean when we say, “We fight from victory - not for victory.” We don’t fight to obtain victory! We stand and maintain the victory of Christ. We don’t fight to win – we fight because Christ has already won!

That’s why only those who sit can stand! Our power for standing comes from being seated with Christ, far and above all principalities and powers!

If you don’t sit with Christ, you cannot stand against the enemy! That’s why Satan works so hard to keep you from knowing who you are in Christ and who Christ is in you! Ephesians 6:10-14 says:

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then...

The word struggle only shows up one time in this passage, but the word stand appears four times. The Greek word means that we are to stand firm and hold our ground. To stand is not an offensive position - it is a defensive position in which you are drawing a line, claiming the rights, declaring the truth you are resting in and the power you are walking in!

The victory has already been won we simply need to hold the ground. Remember - We don't fight *for* victory – we fight *from* the place of victory that Christ won on the cross! For that to happen – We must sit in our position in Christ and walk in the power of the Spirit.

We must submit to God before we can resist the devil! The enemy comes to steal that which has already been given to us by the work of Jesus Christ. He wants to take that which already belongs to us.

Our Christian life is a continual conflict because the enemy is relentless. But, the last thing we want to do in our battle against the enemy is retreat. Spiritual battles are waged daily in even the strongest of God's children. The demand to stand is a demand for courage, determination, vigilance, and for an undaunted hope.

Paul said, “after you have done everything, to stand.” After we sit and after we walk, we stand.

To help us stand God gives us His armor. God has given us everything we need to overcome the enemy. And every part of the armor of God is needed to stand against him. We must put on the whole armor of God – not just part of it!

Then we take up the Sword of the Spirit – the Word of God. Jesus used the Sword of the Spirit when the enemy attacked Him. Three times in the wilderness Jesus used the Scriptures to fight back the enemy. That same weapon is available for us. We need to get into the Word so that we can use it against the enemy!

Then Paul adds to the armor, the Spirit of God Himself. He tells us to pray in the Spirit, which is good reason to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

The Christian life begins with sitting, being secure in our relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Then as we have rested in the fact that we are a child of God - then we can walk the walk. But as we walk the walk the enemy will try to defeat us, that is when we must stand in the victory that God has already given us through Jesus Christ.

The Christian life consists of sitting with Christ, walking by His power and standing in His victory. We begin our Christian life seated with Christ and resting in Him. That rest gives us the strength to walk in holiness in daily life. That rest and that power enable us to stand against the enemy.

So, sit and know who you are in God and rest in all that He has done for you.
Walk and live a life worthy of who you are - you are a child of God!
Stand in His strength in the full armor of God so that you can overcome the
enemy in every aspect of your life.

And at the end our life – we will rest eternally with the Lord, we will walk His
streets of gold and we will stand with the triumphant procession of believers
proclaiming,

“Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty. Who was and is and is to come!
Blessing and honor and glory and power be unto the One who sits on the throne
and unto the Lamb, forever and ever!”