

有关信徒地位的原则

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第三章 和好与接纳

在我们的称义这个问题上，获得了安稳的确据，不仅仅可以让我们对于自己的去往天堂有把握，而且也是能够预备我们进入更深层次的属灵之成长。对于我们在基督里的已被称义了的这个地位的确信，就使我们得以在我们属灵成长途径中后续的那些步骤上，也是满有确定的信念。我们的重生，乃是靠着恩典：“蒙神的恩典……就白白的称义”（罗马书 3:24）；同样的，我们的成长，也是靠着恩典：“你们却要在我们主救主耶稣基督的恩典……上有长进”（彼得后书 3:18）。我们必须在前面的那些原则上站立得稳，才能够在此基础上继续进入到后面之成熟的地步。只有当我们在自己的称义之地位上有确信，我们才是在属灵的层面上预备好了，可以接受其它的那些，关乎地位方面的真理，比如：我们的跟上帝和好，以及被上帝所接纳。

和好

我们得以跟上帝和好的根基，乃在于我们的称义，我们之脱离了罪的刑罚。在主耶稣里面，我们被称义了，不再受到因着罪而来的死亡之惩罚，因此就使得上帝能够令我们与他自己和好。称义使得我们脱离死亡；而和好就带领我们进入生命。“因为我们作仇敌的时候，且藉着神儿子的死，得与神和好；既已和好，就更要 [很有把握的] 因他的生 [他那复活的生命] 得救 [每一天的从罪的辖制当中得释放] 了”（罗马书 5:10）。

与人和好，指的意思是带入到一个适当的合宜的关系当中，进入到和谐的关系里面。当我们在罪中死了的时候，我们是跟生命的主，上帝，彻底隔离开来的，互相之间没有任何实质的关系；在属灵的层面上，我们乃相当于是魔鬼的孩子（约翰福音 8:44）。上帝并没有试图要把我们在亚当里面的那个堕落的本性复苏得生，并且以那个旧人来与他自己和好——这是不可能做到的，因为那个生命是与神为敌的，并且也是不能服在上帝的律法之下的（罗马书 8:7）——我们的天父所做的，乃是在主耶稣的生命里，重新创造了（recreated）我们。他把我们放在了一个完全是新造的位子上，是脱离了亚当，并且进入到基督里面的。“当我们死在过犯中的时候，便叫我们与基督一同活过来。（你们得救是本乎恩。）[神乃是把基督自己的生命赐给了我们，也就是使得耶稣从死里复活的同样的那个新的生命]”（以弗所书 2:5）。

靠着我们自己是不可能与上帝去和好的。因为我们生来就是罪人，因此是与上帝为敌的，要想去跟上帝和好，可不是一件容易的事情。只有借着各各他山上的十字架，才能够根本解决这个问题。就是在那个地方，作为丧失的和被隔绝的罪人，我们却得以跟主耶稣认同，乃是借着他的对罪之死亡，以及他的向着神的复活；我们就得以作为在基督里新造的人（被造物）从死里复活了（哥林多后书 5:17）。也因此“就得与神的性情有分”（彼得后书 1:4），于是就完全的并且是永远的跟父神和好了。“既然藉著他在十字架上所流的血成就了和平，便藉着他叫万有，无论是地上的、天上的都与自己和好了。你们从前与神隔绝，因着恶行，心里与他为敌。但如今他藉着基督的肉身受死，叫你们与自己和好，都成了圣洁，没有瑕疵，无可责备，把你们引到自己面前”（歌罗西书 1:20-22）。

我们现今的“状况”（condition），跟我们永恒的“地位”（position）相比较，是无比卑贱的，但是我们的父神接纳我们——并不是因着我们自己，而是因为我们在他的儿子里面。我们的主耶稣用他的死亡和复活，是如此彻底的把我们称义了，于是我们的天父就能够永远的让我们与他和好，并且上帝这么做乃是完全公义的。他的慈爱与生命也就得以自由地流淌到我们身上来了。“神使那无罪（无罪：原文作不知罪的），替我们成为罪，好叫我们在他里面成为神的义”（哥林多后书 5:21）。“一切都是出于神；他藉着基督使我

们与他和好 [也就是接受了我们，让我们享受他的爱与看顾，带我们进入跟他自己之间的和谐关系当中]”（哥林多后书 5:18）。因着基督的称义与和好的工作，我们就能够获得父神全然的接纳了。

接纳

在此我们要探讨一个最为关键的关乎地位的主题之一，而且是在今天的信徒当中，相对来说比较不被人所知的。有太多的人，在他们每日的生活举止当中，并没有在享受因着被接纳而来的那些益处。若是一位信徒，并不知道自己在基督里已经拥有了被接纳的地位，就往往会陷入挣扎之中，常常试图要通过改进自己的状况，好能够感受到自己被上帝所接纳了。而那些能够在主耶稣里面安稳居住的信徒，他们以基督为自己的义，并深知自己是已经被神接纳了的，就不再企图要通过自我的努力来获取上帝的接纳了。当信徒站在自己正确的地位上，他们就可以信靠基督，并且让基督不断地在他们的生命当中更多的彰显出来。这样的信徒，就可以从自我的包袱当中解脱出来，进而可以多多为着他人的需要而担负起责任来。上帝“又将劝人与他和好的职分赐给我们”了（哥林多后书 5:18）。

状况

首先，我们必须来看一下，那些使得我们未能获得上帝接纳的领域，而且在这些领域里面，我们是一直不能被接纳的。按照我们自然的天性，我们总是觉得，我们的在属灵方面的那些行为和服事，才是促成我们被天父接纳的缘由。在我们的想象当中，正是我们自己的责任（加上一点神的帮助），去忠心的生活和服事，并且多结果子，那么上帝就将会认可我们，悦纳我们，因此也将会继续地和丰富地祝福我们。我们所犯的很自然的错误，就是把我们的被接纳，建基于我们自己的表现与状况之上，而不是建基于我们的地位之上。

尽管不能不说是重要的事情，服事，却往往在许多的热心信徒当中，不幸地充当了一个带来损害的角色，因为他们的服事乃是错误的以状况为中心的。当服事被摆放在过分显著的位置上，并且超过了跟主耶稣之间的团契相交，以及在主里的成长成熟，就会出现一个不好的现象，也就是会把做事（doing），而不是品性（being），作为生命当中的优先考虑。而事实上，“团契与成长”，必须总是要比“服事与活动”来得更加重要的，否则的话，就会导致属灵方面的退步或挫败。

当我们把上帝所设立的这样的秩序倒挂之后，我们的内心就会从产出（律法），而不是接收（恩典），来寻求满足，并寻求那种被接纳的感觉。于是，圣经学习，祷告，以及整个人的追求前景，都会变得几乎全部是以服事为中心的。这样一来，就不再是借着生命产生出服事，倒是以服事作为我们的生命了。因此，只要我们的服事进行得还算顺利，服事的人就会高兴，也觉得自己是被接纳的。但是，一旦服事出现了某些问题，或是没有能够达成预期的果效，其它的一切也就会跟着倒台了。本来我们应该是儿子的，却是成为奴隶了。“可见，从此以后，你不是奴仆，乃是儿子了”（加拉太书 4:7）。

随着时间的推移，我们也会开始意识到，这整个的理念是有某些极其严重的错误的。我们开始看到，我们的言行与服事变得越来越糟糕，就算在我们自己看来，也是越来越不可接受。在这个恶性循环当中，因着我们总是试图去做（do），而不是去成为（be），试图去更多的付出，并且是超出了我们所接收进来的，我们的“状况”就开始变得荒芜与充满肉体 and 血气。事实上，我们一直是在倚靠自己，去做那些只有才能够做到的事情，基督乃是我们的生命；在这条岔路上我们前行得越久，我们的自我的生命就会变得越发的活跃与满怀恶意。

这样的一位以状况为中心的信徒所不明白的是，其实是上帝自己要给我们启示出这个令人震惊的自我本相。他把我们带到一些的情境和关系当中，最终使得我们去面对那个事实，就是，我们要靠自己来作基督徒是必然要失败的——我们其实一无是处，并且我们靠自己是完全无法被接纳的。只有当我们明白了，在我们的肉体之中实在是“没有良善”（罗马书 7:18），我们才能够在我们的地位上得以全然安息，知道自

己乃是在主耶稣里面被完全接纳了的，而且是照着我们本来的面目。能够住在基督里，并且认同说，自己尽管不配，却是完全被神所爱的，正是信徒在地位方面的特权与责任。爱，之所以能够发挥功用，乃是根据它自己的本性，而不是根据其所爱之对象的质素。

当一位信徒不是借着信心居住在那位蒙神悦纳的基督里之时，他乃是想要靠着自己的个人的状况来赢得神的接纳，那么他就会是毫无指望的受到种种阻碍，不能够顺利地进入到团契，成长，以及服事的领域。他就会被那些靠自己来奋斗的各样事工所缠累，试图改善自己的状况，却是无可避免的最终落入到彻底的失败之中。而一位被打败的，沮丧的，以自我为中心的基督徒，又怎么能够享受到跟父神之间的美好团契呢，或是说，又怎么能够跟天父满有平安的相处呢？然而，尽管这种的类似于罗马书第七章所提到的挣扎，是相当令人懊恼的，这却是我们的天父在装备我们，好使得我们有机会，明白并学会，把我们的倚靠与信心，从我们自己身上，尤其是我们的状况之中，挪移到我们在基督里的位份上。“不再是我，乃是基督”（加拉太书 2:20）。

地位

“又因爱我们，就按着自己意旨所喜悦的，预定我们藉着耶稣基督得儿子的名分，使他荣耀的恩典得着称赞；这恩典是他在爱子里所赐给我们的 [英文版的圣经译文提到说，我们是在爱子里被接纳的——译者注]。我们藉这爱子的血得蒙救赎，过犯得以赦免，乃是照他丰富的恩典”（以弗所书 1:5-7）。当我们领悟到自己在主耶稣里面的地位，并且因此而以他为我们的接纳，住在他的里面时，我们就成长起来了，而且是越来越少地从我们自己的里面去期待任何事物，倒是会越来越多的从他那里去期待更多。“我的心哪，你当默默无声，专等候神，因为我的盼望 [期待] 是从他而来”（诗篇 62:5）。

当我们更多的在我们的地位上被建造起来时，我们就会更加愿意地去否定自我，每一天都把这个罪恶的源头彻底地带到十字架那里，放在十字架上面来钉死。这样的一个渐进的从自我的辖制当中得以脱离的过程，就帮助我们获得了逐步加深的在主耶稣里面的安息；我们就得以在生命的源头那里生根建造，于是我们就能够不费气力地成长起来，还能够结出果子，归荣耀给神。靠着自我所做出的努力，只能够产生出血肉的工作（加拉太书 5:19-21），而地位上的安息，却能够促成圣灵的果子（加拉太书 5:22, 23）。

“你们要常在我里面 [在地位上]，我也常在你们里面。枝子若不常在葡萄树上，自己就不能结果子；你们若不常在我里面，也是这样。我是葡萄树，你们是枝子。常在我里面的，我也常在他里面，这人就多结果子；因为离了我，你们就不能做什么”（约翰福音 15:4, 5）。尽管我们是在地位上居住在主耶稣里面的，我们其实也是很清楚的知道，我们自己里面的真实状况如何。我们为着自己的依然会犯罪而有所顾虑，但是我们却不再是在那个自我的领域里面进行改良，也不再是想要倚靠自己里面的状况去获得神的接纳。我们乃是安息在一个地位之上，安息在那位已经全然和永远地被上帝所接纳者的里面。并且，在那位爱子的里面，是再也不需要任何的改进，也不可能再有改进了的。我们诚然已经是把一个无法改进的自己，去换取了那位完美者。

在我们的地位上站立稳固之后，我们就会不断地认识到我们在他里面的被接纳，并且能够更加自由地来跟我们的天父有团契相交。就是在这种蒙福的团契互动之中，我们得以成长，并且也就表现得更，越来越多地被塑造成他的形象了。“我们众人既然敞着脸得以看见主的荣光，好像从镜子里反照，就变成主的形状，荣上加荣，如同从主的灵变成的”（哥林多后书 3:18）。我们基本上就能够以基督为中心，而不再以自我为中心。借着我们在他里面的地位，我们就有了平安，喜乐，并且团契，这些都是随着我们属灵状况之进展，而自然会出现在我们的以十字架为中心的这条道路之上的。

其中的一个最为显著的好处之一，也就是当我们安息于我们的被接纳之地位上时所达成的，就是那种深深的，无法否认的确据，也就是我们知道说，上帝一定是为着我们的。“耶和華說：我知道我向你們所懷的意念是賜平安的意念，不是降災禍的意念，要叫你們末後有指望”（耶利米书 29:11）。“既然藉着他在十

字架上所流的血成就了和平……”（歌罗西书 1:20）。“如今，那些在基督耶稣里的就不定罪了……神若帮助我们，谁能敌挡我们呢？”（罗马书 8:1, 31）。

当圣灵把十字架上那已经成就了的工作，应用到我们内部的罪性根源之上时，这种内在的被钉十字架的感受，有可能会令到我们以为上帝是敌对我们的。而事实却正好与这种感受相反；神所带领我们经过的任何的事物，其实都是为着我们属灵之成长的。“我们晓得万事都互相效力，叫爱神的人得益处，就是按他旨意被召的人。因为他预先所知道的人，就预先定下效法他儿子的模样，使他儿子在许多弟兄中作长子”（罗马书 8:28, 29）。因此，我们就能够“凡事谢恩；因为这是神在基督耶稣里向你们所定的旨意”（帖撒罗尼迦前书 5:18）。“神既不爱惜自己的儿子，为我们众人舍了，岂不也把万物和他一同白白的赐给我们吗？”（罗马书 8:32）。“凡事都是为你们，好叫恩惠因人多越发加增，感谢格外显多，以致荣耀归与神”（哥林多后书 4:15）。

我们在基督里的地位是何等的安稳与坚不可摧啊！“耶和华是我的岩石，我的山寨，我的救主，我的神，我的磐石，我所投靠的。他是我的盾牌，是拯救我的角，是我的高台”（诗篇 18:2）。当那位“弟兄们的控告者”用它那恶毒的手指，指出我们里面那个自我的生命之缺欠，并且揭发出在我们里面的那个真实景况，试图迫使我们去怀疑自己是否被神接纳时，我们就能够理直气壮地站在我们的地位上，安心地敌挡他，并且把关注点引向基督。虽然，我们对于自己的那个不够完美性、不可接纳性，乃是心知肚明的，但是我们更是知道，自己在那位蒙爱者基督里面，是已经被全然接纳了的。仇敌永远都无法触碰到基督，而且我们的“生命与基督一同藏在神里面”（歌罗西书 3:3）。撒旦可以来充当那位指控和检举我们者，但是我们有两位替我们辩护的律师——一位就是坐宝座的羔羊，另一位就是内住在我们里面的——更何况说，事实情况是，那位公义的法官还是我们的父亲呢！

“所以，他凡事该与他的弟兄相同，为要在神的事上成为慈悲忠信的大祭司，为百姓的罪献上挽回祭”（希伯来书 2:17）。“你凭慈爱领了你所赎的百姓；你凭能力引他们到了你的圣所”（出埃及记 15:13）。我们的父神已经使我们与他和好了，并且是按照那使得他能够对自己保持恒常不变的方式，因为他不但是“自己为义，也称信耶稣的人为义”（罗马书 3:26）。

THE PRINCIPLE OF POSITION

BY MILES J. STANFORD

CHAPTER 3 RECONCILIATION AND ACCEPTANCE

The settled assurance of our justification is not simply to make us sure of getting to heaven, but to prepare us for further spiritual progress. Assurance of our justified position in Christ gives us sureness in each subsequent step of our spiritual development. By grace we were born anew: “Being justified freely by His grace” (Rom 3:24); and by grace we will grow: “But grow in grace” (2 Pet 3:18). We must stand in the first principles before we can go on from them to maturity. Until we rest assured in our position of justification, we are not spiritually prepared for the positional truths of our reconciliation to, and acceptance by, God.

Reconciliation

The ground of our reconciliation to God is justification from the penalty of sin. In the Lord Jesus we were justified from the death penalty of sin, thereby enabling God to reconcile us to Himself. Justification frees us from death: reconciliation brings us into life. “For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, it is much more (certain), now that we are reconciled, that we shall be saved (daily delivered from sin’s dominion) through His (resurrection) life” (Romans 5:10).

To be reconciled is to be brought into right relationship, into harmony. Being dead in our sins, we were completely cut off from any relationship with the God of life; spiritually, we were the children of the devil (John 8:44). Instead

of seeking to bring to life and reconcile the fallen Adamic nature—an impossibility, because that life is enmity toward God and cannot be subject to the law of God (Romans 8:7)—our Father recreated us in the life of the Lord Jesus. He placed us in a totally new position, out of Adam, into Christ. “Even when we were dead... He made us alive together in fellowship and in union with Christ. He gave us the very life of Christ Himself, the same new life with which He quickened Him” (Ephesians 2:5).

Self cannot be reconciled to God. Since we were born sinners and therefore were enmity against God, our reconciliation to Him was no simple matter. It took the Cross of Calvary to solve the problem. There, as lost and alienated sinners, we were identified with the Lord Jesus in His death unto sin and resurrection unto God; we were raised from the dead as new creatures (creations) in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). Being made “partakers of the divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4), we were completely and eternally reconciled to the Father. “Having made peace through the Blood of His Cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself... and you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in His sight” (Colossians 1:20-22).

Our present condition is infinitely inferior to our eternal position, but our Father accepts us—not in ourselves, but in His Son. Our Lord Jesus so completely justified us in His death and resurrection that our Father is absolutely just in eternally reconciling us. His love and life are free to flow. “For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Corinthians 5:21). “All things are from God, who through Jesus Christ reconciled us to Himself (received us into favor, brought us into harmony with Himself)” (2 Corinthians 5:18). Due to His work of justification and reconciliation there is full acceptance for us.

Acceptance

Here we have one of the most vital positional subjects, and yet it is relatively unknown among believers today. All too few are enjoying the benefits of acceptance in their daily walk. The believer who is not aware of his position of acceptance in Christ is caught in the struggle to improve his condition in order to feel acceptable to God. But the believer who abides in the Lord Jesus as his righteousness and acceptance is freed from futile self-effort. Standing in his position, he trusts Christ to manifest Himself increasingly in his life. He is free from the burden of himself and has become burdened on behalf of others. God “hath given unto us the ministry of reconciliation” (2 Corinthians 5:18).

Condition

First of all, we must consider the area in which we are not accepted by God, nor ever can be. It is only natural for us to feel that our spiritual walk and service make us acceptable to our Father. We imagine that it is our responsibility (with His help) to live and serve so faithfully and fruitfully that He will approve of us, and therefore continually and abundantly bless us. We are making the natural mistake of depending upon condition, instead of position, for our acceptance.

Important as it is, service is often a condition-centered detriment in the lives of many zealous believers. When service is given predominance over fellowship with and growth in the Lord Jesus, doing, instead of being, takes over in the life. Fellowship and growth must ever take precedence over service and activity, otherwise spiritual declension sets in.

In this reversal of God’s order for us, the heart seeks satisfaction and a sense of acceptance through production (law), instead of reception (grace). Bible study and prayer, as well as one’s outlook, become almost exclusively service-centered. Instead of life bringing forth service, service becomes the life. Thus, as long as the service goes well, the servant is happy and feels accepted. But once the service wanes, or fails to produce results, all else falls with it. We are to be sons, not servants, “Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son” (Galatians 4:7).

In time, we begin to realize that there is something very wrong with this entire concept. We become aware that our walk and service are less and less acceptable, even to ourselves. In seeking to do rather than to be, in attempting to give out more than we take in, our condition becomes barren and carnal. We have been depending upon self to do

what only Christ our life can do; the farther we move on this tangent, the more active and malignant the self-life appears to be.

What the condition-centered believer does not realize is that God Himself is causing this shattering revelation of self. He takes us into situations and relationships that finally cause us to face up to the fact of our failure as Christians—our nothingness, our total unacceptability in ourselves. Not until we understand that in our flesh there “dwelleth no good thing” (Romans 7:18), can we rest in our position of complete acceptance in the Lord Jesus, just as we are. To abide in Christ, and to consent to be loved while unworthy, is the believer’s positional privilege and responsibility. Love functions according to its nature, not according to the quality of its object.

The believer who is not abiding by faith in the acceptable One, but who is relying upon his personal condition for acceptance, is hopelessly handicapped in the matter of fellowship, growth and service. He is entangled in the self-effort of working to improve his condition, and is inevitably cast down in utter defeat. How can a defeated, depressed, self-centered Christian enjoy fellowship with the Father, or be at peace with Him? Yet, devastating as this Romans Seven trek is, it is our Father’s preparation of us in order that we may shift our reliance and faith from our condition in ourselves, to our position in Christ. “Not I, but Christ” (Galatians 2:20).

Position

“Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved. In whom we have redemption through His Blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace” (Ephesians 1:5-7). In learning to take our position in the Lord Jesus and thereby to abide in Him as our acceptance, we grow to expect less and less from ourselves, and more and more from Him. “My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from Him” (Psalm 62:5).

As we become more fully established in our position, we are increasingly willing to reject self, to leave all that sinful source on the Cross for daily crucifixion. This progressive freedom from the dominion of self gives us a deepening rest in the Lord Jesus; we become rooted and grounded in the Source of life, where we grow effortlessly and fruit is borne to His glory. Self-effort produces the works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21), while positional rest fosters the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22f).

“Abide in Me (your position), and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can you, except you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches: he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me you can do nothing” (John 15:4f). Although we abide in the Lord Jesus as our position, we are ever aware of our condition in ourselves. We are concerned about the sinfulness of self, but no longer do we depend upon improvement in that realm for our acceptance. We are resting in a position, in a Person who is fully and forever accepted by God, One in whom there is no improvement necessary or possible. We have exchanged unimproveable self for the Perfect One.

Established in our position, we become increasingly aware of our acceptance in Him and are more free to fellowship with our Father. In this blessed communion we grow, becoming more manifestly conformed to His image. “We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord” (2 Corinthians 3:18). We are basically Christ-centered, instead of self-centered. Through our position in Him we have peace, joy and fellowship which abide all along our Cross-centered path as our spiritual condition is developed.

One of the foremost benefits of resting in our position of acceptance is the deep and undying assurance that God is for us. “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end” (Jeremiah 29:11). “Having made peace through the Blood of His Cross” (Colossian 1:20). “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus...If God be for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:1, 31).

As the Holy Spirit applies the finished work of the Cross to the sinful source within, this inner crucifixion may lead us to think God is against us. But it is just the opposite; everything He take us through is for our spiritual growth. “All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son” (Romans 8:28f). Therefore, “in everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you” (1 Thessalonians 5:18). “He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” (Romans 8:32). “For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God” (2 Corinthians 4:15).

What a safe and impregnable position is ours in Christ! “The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower” (Psalm 18:2). When the “accuser of the brethren” points his maligning finger at the self-life within, at our condition in ourselves, seeking to get us to question our acceptance, we are able to rest in our position and point to Christ. We are well aware of self’s unacceptability, but we are much more aware of our acceptance in the Beloved. The enemy can never touch Him, and our “life is hid with Christ in God” (Colossians 3:3). Satan may be the counsel for the prosecution, but we have two Counsels for defense—an Advocate at the throne, and an Advocate within—to say nothing of the fact that the righteous Judge is our Father!

“Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people” (Hebrews 2:17). “Thou in Thy mercy hast led forth the people whom Thou hast redeemed: Thou hast guided them in Thy strength unto Thy holy habitation” (Exodus 15:13). Our Father has reconciled us to Himself in a way that enables Him to be consistent with Himself, being both “just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus” (Romans 3:26).