

有关信徒地位的原则 迈尔斯·斯坦福 (MILES J. STANFORD)

第四章 完全与保障 (IV. Completeness and Security)

在关乎我们地位的那些事实上，我们所迈出的每一个信心的脚步，都是在预备我们进入下一个阶段的旅程，这是因为，每一个后续的步骤，都是建立在先前的那些步骤之上的。我们的信心之所以会增长，就是借助于持续地汲取属灵的真理，特别是当这些真理被适切的彼此联系起来时。“他竟命上加命、令上加令、律上加律、例上加例、这里一点、那里一点”（以赛亚书 28:10）。“义人的脚步，被耶和華立定”（诗篇 37:23）。

有许多的心里饥渴的信徒，正是因为未能够在罗马书第三章的那些事实当中找到安息，于是就会在试图进入到罗马书第八章的经历时，常常出现各种的挣扎。他们为着自己的极其缺乏以弗所书并歌罗西书中所描述的那种高涨的属灵状况，而深感内疚，殊不知，在事实上，他们乃是还没有充分认识到，罗马书第五章当中的与神和好之真理，更不用说去按照罗马书第六章的教导，达成与基督的联合，等等。然而，罗马书第七章的经历，却是广为人知的。对信徒来说，绝对所必须的，就是要让圣灵带领我们，按照上帝在圣经中所安排的顺序往前走，而每一个层面之真理，都是为着下一个真理提供基础的。假如忽略或者是跳过了其中的一个，那么接下来的那个真理就会失去坚固的根基。“我的脚踏定了你的路径，我的两脚未曾滑跌”（诗篇 17:5）。

在他里面是完全的

一旦我们确定的知道，我们在主耶稣里面拥有了称义，和好，以及被接纳，我们就可以继续采食进一步的真理，比如说，我们在他里面的完全。“你们既然 [凭着信心] 接受了主基督耶稣，就当遵他而行，在他里面生根建造，信心坚固，正如你们所领的教训，感谢的心也更增长了。……因为神本性一切的丰盛都有形有体的居住在基督里面，你们在他里面也得了丰盛 [得了丰盛，按照英文译本，是：在他里面得以完全——译者注]”（歌罗西书 2:6, 7, 9, 10）。

我们所需要的一切，就是关乎我们的基督徒生活的一切，无论是现在的还是永远的，都已经在主耶稣里预备好了，并且都是完全的与便利的，等着我们去拿来用呢。我们的生命状况如何，绝对是取决于我们的资源的完整性。我们之信心，乃是安息在我们的天父在圣经中所留下的见证，也就是他在基督里，已经替我们成就的，以及他会与我们一同来成就的那些工作，而绝非取决于天父根据我们当前的状况，而正在与我们一同或是为着我们作工的层面。正是对于葡萄树之树干的信心，才会带出来枝条上面的果子。

我们在那位于主耶稣里面的位子上，能够安息，就会对我们的属灵状况产生直接的影响。当我们知道，我们的天父已经使得我们在基督里完全了，我们就能够对他在我们的属灵状况当中，培育这种完全性，充满信心。假如我们不具备这样的对于在主耶稣里的已然成就了的工作有认识，我们的信心就会缺乏那必要的把握，也就是对于上帝会在我们每天的成长当中制造出确定的进步之把握。

想一下，在哥林多后书 5:17 当中的对于地位方面的真理，“若有人在基督里，他就是新造的人，旧事已过，都变成新的了。”在主耶稣里，我们一起都是成为了新造的人，重新降生，并且在他里面是完全的。主耶稣乃是造成我们属灵状况得以成长的永恒的源泉。“我们原是他 [自己] 的工作 [他的手艺]，在基督耶稣里造成的 [从新得以出生]，为要叫我们行善 [按照他事先就替我们预备好了的道路]，就是神所预备 [预先计划] 叫我们行的”（以弗所书 2:10）。

虽然，这个工作在基督里是已经完成了的，然而对于我们的经历方面来说，这并非是自动的过程。我们的责任就是要来信靠。我们不仅仅是藉着信心而重生得救的，我们也是同样要靠着信心而生活，行动，以及成长的。为着使我们能够顺利地进入到我们的天父已经替我们在基督里建立的宏图当中，我们就必须靠着信心，有理智的，而且是以合作的心态，去“穿上新人；这新人是照着神的形像造的，有真理的仁义和圣洁”（以弗所书 4:24）。简单地说，这就意味着我们必须安息于我们在主耶稣里的位子之上，以此作为我们的生命。我们之所以要停留和持守在那里，是因为我们已经被建立（重生）在那里了。“穿上了新人。这新人在知识上渐渐更新，正如造他主的形像”（歌罗西书 3:10）。“你们受洗 [属灵的面，借着圣灵] 归入基督的，都是披戴基督了”（加拉太书 3:27）。

“总要披戴主耶稣基督，不要为肉体安排，去放纵私欲”（罗马书 13:14）。当我们靠着信心住在主耶稣里面的时候，我们就是“披戴”主耶稣了。我们复活的主，他就是我们之基督徒生活以及服事的全部供应；而对于我们自我的老生命来说，十字架就是那唯一的脱离之途径。当我们满怀信心地安息在主耶稣里面时，圣灵就会借着我们之成长，把那些关乎基督的事物赐给我们。其结果就是，我们的状况（condition）开始逐渐地反映出我们在实际上已经获得的地位（position）。靠着信心，我们就住在他的里面，也在他的里面生活；靠着信心，他的生命就在我们的内心得以被培育，得以被彰显。“我小子啊，我为你们再受生产之苦，直等到基督成形在你们心里”（加拉太书 4:19）。

在基督里的保障

根据以上所提到的事实，信徒在永恒当中的保障，就成为了一个预先可以知道的定论；一旦圣灵把某位基督徒建立在前面提到的那些步骤上，对于这个保障之问题的答案，就是毫无异义的啦。但是，如果没有这些必须的圣经方面的预备，则是必然会在背景当中，常常会酝酿着一个挑剔的问号：我到底是无条件的并且是永远的被拯救了呢，还是，我只是依然处在考察期里面的呢？

那些感觉自己在救恩方面有保障的信徒，也是时不时会遇到挑衅，就是会有另外一些人，他们是极力反对任何的有关无条件的、永恒的救恩保障之说法的。他们对于这方面的真理，是称其为“那该死的教义”的，因为他们坚持说，这样的自以为有救恩确据的信念，就必然会导致人们不再去守律法了。然而，这些亲爱的兄姊们所没有弄明白的是，真正站立在恩典之中，站立在有保障的地位之上的信徒，才会是一位在最大程度上去敬畏上帝与恨恶罪之人。并且，他之所以恨恶罪，就是因为罪本身，而不仅仅是因着罪所会带来的结果。此外，他的对于上帝的惧怕，并不是一种奴性的惧怕；而且也不是一种对于自己丧失上帝之爱的担忧，乃是担心自己冒犯了和伤害了神如此的大爱。

“但在你有赦免之恩，要叫人敬畏你”（诗篇 130:4）。因此，一位有安全感与救恩确据的信徒之惧怕，乃是一种带着尊敬的信靠，并且伴随着对于邪恶的憎恨。“敬畏耶和华在乎恨恶邪恶”（箴言 8:13）。“因为神救众人的恩典已经显明出来，教训我们除去不敬虔的心和世俗的情欲，在今世自守、公义、敬虔度日”（提多书 2:11, 12）。恩典，就会把所有的猜测工作给驱逐了，并且带给人满满的的确据；而律法却是让人只能够去猜测的。

关乎救恩保障的真理，会让基督徒在其成长的过程当中，有坚固的根基。只有那些不知道救恩保障的信徒，因为缺乏安全感，就自然倾向于是而不稳定的，他们容易随风飘荡，从一种“经历”摇荡到另一种“经历”当中，往往也是不好好学习，也就因而不能够彻底弄明白这个真理。正是因为我们能够在我们永恒的地位上得以安息，就会极大的释放我们，不再企图靠着自已那无谓的和有罪的“自我奋斗”来改善自己的状态，试图在自己的状态上，来建立起我们的保障。当我们居住在永恒的救恩保障当中，也就是在基督里的保障之中，就会使得我们在信心方面有坚固的根基，好让圣灵有机会来执行他恩惠的服事工作，也就是那在我们里面所展开的——也就是借着把我们的自我钉死于十字架，并因此导致了我们的“在我们主救主耶稣基督的恩典和知识上有长进”（彼得后书 3:18）。

其实，从属灵的角度来看，那些反对永恒之确据，不接受救恩保障（security）之真理教导的人，并不是因为他们所谓的担心，也就是怕说，有了保障之后，人们就不再需要守律法了。而是，这些反对之人，并没有在神的话语上操练信心，否则圣经中的教导就会使得他们看见和接受这个真理了。这真理就是，他们在复活之主里面的地位，以及因此而来的确据，接纳，与保障，都是已经完成了的工作。因为不明白这个真理，他们就只能是状况为中心的（condition-centered），所以在其本质上，也就是以自我为中心，并且是属地的，受制于地上的事务的。

而在另一方面，当一位信徒知道自己是对罪死了，并且是已经在复活的主耶稣基督里被重新塑造了的，他就会明白，他在上帝面前的地位，唯独是建基于基督的生命本身的。“所以，你们因信基督耶稣都是神的儿子”（加拉太书 3:26）。“既是儿女，便是后嗣，就是神的后嗣，和基督同作后嗣”（罗马书 8:17）。“亲爱的弟兄啊，我们现在是神的儿女，将来如何，还未显明；但我们知道，主若显现，我们必要像他”（约翰一书 3:2）。

诚然，按照我们的状况（condition）所彰显出来的情况，并不能完全代表了我们的位份（position）之实际，也不能够代表将来主显现的时候我们所将会成为的样式。然而，一位享受着安息的信徒并不是倚靠外在的表现的，也不是受到他自己的状态之影响而左右摇摆的。他知道自己是按照另一种截然不同的根基而被接纳与获得保障的，那根基乃是在基督里的位份，而基督就是上帝所拣选的人子。如此，这样的真理，并非让我们轻忽恩典，对上帝的律法漠不关心，反而是使我们对主耶稣满怀信心。就是在这样的宁静与确信之中，我们可以继续前进，“以致你们在恩赐上没有一样不及人的，等候我们的主耶稣基督显现。他也必坚固你们到底，叫你们在我们主耶稣基督的日子无可责备”（哥林多前书 1:7, 8）。

一位得以在上帝儿子的里面安息的信徒，知道自己乃是有永恒的保障的。“因为你们已经死了，你们的生命与基督一同藏在神里面。基督是我们的生命，他显现的时候，你们也要与他一同显现在荣耀里”（歌罗西书 3:3, 4）。“不但如此，我们既藉着我主耶稣基督得与神和好，也就藉着他以神为乐”（罗马书 5:11）。

一位得以在上帝的主权里面安息的信徒，也知道自己乃是有永恒的保障的。“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。预先所定下的人又召他们来；所召来的人又称他们为义；所称为义的人又叫他们得荣耀”（罗马书 8:29, 30）。“那能保守你们不跌倒，叫你们无瑕无疵，欢欢喜喜站在他荣耀之前的我们的救主独一的神”（犹大书 24）。

一位得以在上帝公义里面安息的信徒，也知道自己乃是有永恒的保障的。“好在今时显明他的义，使人知道自己自己为义，也称信耶稣的人为义”（罗马书 3:26）。“因基督也曾一次为罪受苦（有古卷：受死），就是义的代替不义的，为要引我们到神面前”（彼得前书 3:18）。“如今，那些在基督耶稣里的就不定罪了。因为赐生命圣灵的律，在基督耶稣里释放了我，使我脱离罪和死的律了”（罗马书 8:1, 2）。

一位得以在上帝旨意里面安息的信徒，也知道自己乃是有永恒的保障的。“不是你们拣选了我，是我拣选了你们，并且分派你们去结果子，叫你们的果子常存”（约翰福音 15:16）。“但你们得在基督耶稣里，是本乎神，神又使他成为我们的……救赎”（哥林多前书 1:30）。

一位得以在上帝的爱里面安息的信徒，也照样会知道，自己乃是有永恒的保障的。“我以永远的爱爱你，因此我以慈爱吸引你”（耶利米书 31:3）。“谁能使我们与基督的爱隔绝呢？难道是患难吗？是困苦吗？是逼迫吗？是饥饿吗？……因为我深信无论是死，是生，是天使，是掌权的，是有能的，是现在的事，是将来的事，是高的，是低处的，是别的受造之物，都不能叫我们与神的爱隔绝；这爱是在我们的主基督耶稣里的”（罗马书 8:35, 38, 39）。

THE PRINCIPLE OF POSITION

BY MILES J. STANFORD

CHAPTER 4 COMPLETENESS AND SECURITY

Each faith-step we take concerning the facts of our position prepares us for the following one, since every succeeding step is established upon all that precedes. Our faith grows by feeding upon properly related scriptural truth. “For precept must be upon precept...line upon line” (Isa. 28:10). “The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord” (Psalms 37:23).

Many hungry-hearted believers are struggling to get into the experience of Romans Eight when they are not yet resting in the facts of Romans Three. They feel guilty because they fall far short of the heights of Ephesians and Colossians, when in fact they do not adequately know peace with God in Romans Five, to say nothing of identification with Christ in Romans Six. The experience of Romans Seven is well known, however. It is absolutely necessary to allow the Holy Spirit to take us along in God’s sequence of Scripture, as each plane of truth is foundational for the next. Skip over one, and firm footing for the next is lost. “Hold up my goings in Thy paths, that my footsteps slip not” (Psalms 17:5).

Complete in Him

Once we are scripturally assured of our justification, reconciliation, and acceptance in the Lord Jesus, we are to feed upon the truth of our completeness in Him. “As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord (by faith), so walk you in Him: rooted and built up in Him, and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving...For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And you are complete in Him” (Colossians 2:6f, 9f).

All that we will ever need for our Christian life, both now and forever, is ready and waiting in the Lord Jesus, complete and accessible. Our condition is absolutely dependent upon our completed Source. Faith rests upon our Father’s scriptural testimony as to what He has already done with and for us in Christ, never upon what He is doing with and for us in our present condition. Faith in the Vine brings forth fruit in the branches.

Resting in our position in the Lord Jesus has a direct effect upon our condition. When we know that our Father has already made us complete in Christ, we are able to trust Him in the midst of His development of that completeness in our spiritual condition. Without the knowledge of this finished work in the Lord Jesus, our faith lacks the necessary confidence that He will make sure progress in our daily growth.

Think for a moment of the positional truth of 2 Corinthians 5:27, “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature (creation): old things are passed away; behold all things are become new.” In the Lord Jesus we are altogether new creation, born anew and complete in Him. He is the eternal Source from which our condition is to develop. “For we are God’s (own) handiwork (His workmanship), recreated in Christ Jesus, (born anew) that we may do those good works which God predestined (planned beforehand) for us, (taking paths which He prepared ahead of time), that we should walk in them---living the good life which He prearranged and made ready for us to live” (Ephesians 2:10).

Even though the work is complete in Christ, there is nothing automatic about our experience of it. Ours is the responsibility of faith. We were not only born anew by faith, but we are to live, walk, and grow by faith. In order to enter intelligently and cooperatively into that which our Father has established for us in Christ, by faith are to “put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness” (Ephesians 4:24). This simply means that we are to rest in our position in the Lord Jesus as our life. We are to abide there because we have already been established (born) there. “And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the

image of Him that created him” (Colossians 3:10). “For as many of you as have been baptized (spiritually, by the Holy Spirit) into Christ have put on Christ” (Galatians 3:27).

“But put you on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof” (Romans 13:14). The Lord Jesus is “put on” as we abide in Him by faith. Our risen Lord is full provision for our Christian life and service; the Cross is the only provision we have for the self-life. As we confidently rest in the Lord Jesus, the Holy Spirit gives us the things of Christ by means of growth. As a result, our condition begins to reflect what we already are in position. By faith, we abide and live in Him; by faith, His life is developed and manifested in us. “My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you” (Galatians 4:19).

Secure in Christ

Based upon the preceding facts, the external security of the believer becomes a foregone conclusion; once the Holy Spirit establishes the Christian in the previous steps, there can be no question about this one. But without the required scriptural preparation, there is bound to be a nagging question mark hovering in the background. Am I unconditionally and forever saved, or am I on probation?

The secure believer may now and then be accosted by those who strongly oppose any thought of unconditional, eternal security. They refer to it as “that damnable doctrine,” and insist that such a belief results in lawlessness. What these dear folk fail to grasp is that the believer who truly stands in the grace of positional security is the one who most fully fears God and hates sin. And he hates sin for what it is, not just for its consequences. Moreover, his is not a slavish fear; it is not a fear of losing God’s love, but of offending and grieving it.

“But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared” (Psalms 130:4). The fear of the secure believer is a reverential trust, coupled with hatred of evil. “The fear of the Lord is to hate evil” (Proverbs 8:13). “For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, on this present world” (Titus 2:11f). Grace banishes all guesswork, and gives one assurance; the law keeps one guessing.

The truth of security holds the Christian firm in the midst of the process of growth. It is the insecure believer who is naturally unstable and flounders from one “experience” to another, never learning and therefore never arriving at the truth. Resting in our eternal position frees us from the futile and sinful self-effort of trying to make our condition the basis of our security. Abiding in our eternal security in Christ gives the steadiness of faith necessary for the Holy Spirit to carry on His gracious ministry within---that of dealing with self in crucifixion, and thereby causing us to “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18).

The spiritual explanation for opposition to true eternal security is not the claim that it produces lawlessness. It is rather that those who oppose do not exercise faith in the Word, which would enable them to see and accept their position in the risen Lord for assurance, acceptance and security. They are condition-centered, hence self-centered and earth-bound.

On the other hand, the believer who knows that he has died unto sin and that he has been recreated in the risen Lord Jesus, understands that he has no other position before God than the very life of Christ. “For you are all children of God by faith in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:26). “And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ” (Romans 8:17). “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him” (1 John 3:2).

It certainly is not yet manifest in our condition what we already are in our position, or what we shall be when He appears. But the resting believer does not reply upon appearances, neither is he affected one way or another by his condition. He knows that he is accepted and secure on a different basis altogether, that of his position in Christ, the Man of God’s choosing. This is not carelessness, but confidence in Him. In quietness and assurance we are to continue, “waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall also confirm you unto the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 1:7f).

The believer who rests in the Son of God knows that he is eternally secure. “For you died, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested, then shall you also with Him, be manifested in glory” (Colossians 3:3f). “And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement” (Romans 5:11).

The believer who rests in the sovereignty of God knows that he is eternally secure. “For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified” (Romans 8:29f). “Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy” (Jude 24).

The believer who rests in the justice of God knows that he is eternally secure, “To declare...His righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus” (Romans 5:26). “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God” (1 Peter 3:18). “There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and death” (Romans 8:1f).

The believer who rests in the will of God knows that he is eternally secure. “You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain” (John 15:16). “Of Him are you in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us...redemption” (1 Corinthians 1:30).

The believer who rests in the love of God knows that he is eternally secure. “I have loved you with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn you” (Jeremiah 31:3). “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution....?....For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:35, 38f).