

## The Christian's Relationship To God - Now

### Introduction

- A. The Bible is clear concerning the believer's future blessings. We look forward to the return of Jesus Christ, to resurrection of our body, to glorification, to reigning and serving Jesus Christ in the Millennium and to Heaven itself.
- B. The Scripture is also very explicit concerning the believer's present relationship with God. We are reminded in Ephesians 1:3 and II Peter 1:3 that we have been blessed with all spiritual blessings. In many passages of the Bible the word "now" is used to indicate some of the blessings we possess today.

### I. The Believer is Justified - Now, Romans 5:8,9.

But God commended His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.

Observation: There are two concepts in these verses not often used today. The first is "justified". This refers to that act of God whereby He declares an unrighteous sinner to be righteous in His sight. The second concept is "His blood." By this term the work of the Lord Jesus in His Crucifixion and Resurrection is designated. The emphasis is placed upon the value of His sacrifice for us. Now we can relate the meaning of the verses: God's love was expressed in the Lord Jesus dying for us, His death has brought to us forgiveness, righteousness (justification), and the promise of deliverance from wrath (Hell). All this became ours when we received Him as Savior.

### II. The Believer is Able to Live Free From Sin - Now, Romans 6:22\*

But now being made free from sin and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life.

Observation: While this freedom to live for God is a present possession it is never perfect in that the believer is constantly growing in the grace of God and in the knowledge of right and wrong. While never perfect and never without the struggles of the life of faith it is correctly called "freedom" with its fruit "holiness" and the end of such a life is "everlasting life."

### III. The Believer is Dead to the Law - Now, Romans 7:6.

But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held, that we should serve in newness of spirit and not in the oldness of the letter.

Observation: To be "dead to the law" simply means that through the work of the Lord Jesus Christ we are credited with fulfilling the Law. The Lord Jesus stated He had come to do that (Matt. 5:17). When we believe upon Him the value of this work is imputed to us (Rom. 8:3,4; 10:4).

IV. The Believer is Free From Condemnation - Now, Romans 8:1.

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Observation: We are free from condemnation in that Jesus Christ took upon Himself all of our judgment (Gal. 3:13). The believer is absolved.

V. The Believer is in Legal Fellowship with God - Now, Ephesians 2:13,19.

But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ . . . Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners but fellowcitizens with the saints and of the household of God.

Observation: In contrast to our lost condition described here as "far off" the believer has been brought into a relationship of fellowship with God. This is more than an experience. It has a legal basis in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are in fellowship with God.

VI. The Believer is Reconciled to God - Now, Colossians 1:21.

And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled.

Observation: Again this verse presents the contrast: once alienated and enemies - now reconciled. We are here reminded that this is true in our lives because of the initiative of God. ". . . yet now hath He reconciled." His initiative is seen in His electing choice, His provision in Jesus Christ, His act of bringing us to Himself, and in His keeping power. The believer lives in a state of reconciliation.

VII. The Believer is Included Among God's People -- Now, I Peter 2:10.

Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God, which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

Observation: Here we are told of two great truths that are the present possession of all believers: we are included among the people of God and we have obtained mercy. The first truth emphasizes the thought of rights and privileges. All of the benefits inherited by the people of God belongs to each of us. The second truth indicates the basis of such an inclusion among the people of God - it is divine mercy. If God had dealt with us according to our sins we would have been excluded from Him forever. But, in love, God has had mercy upon us.

VIII. The Believer is a Child of God - Now, I John 3:2.

Beloved, now are we the sons of God and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

Observation: It is a comfort to know that we do not have to wait until we die to find out if we are adopted in God's family. We are assured by this verse and many others that the assurance of salvation is in the will of God for us. God wants us to know it now.

Conclusion: It is important that we believe God and His Word concerning our present relationship with Himself. Our feelings, experiences and circumstances are not authoritative. God's Word is our authority.