

GETTING OUR STORY STRAIGHT

PART 2

Growing up in Christ

Note: This lesson is a companion piece to a message Graham Cooke spoke at the Aglow International U. S. conference in Ontario, California entitled *Getting Our Story Straight*. Please refer back to the original transcript of that message as you study for individual growth or prepare to mentor others.

The world we live in does not define who we are. We do not draw our strength from this world. We do not draw our thoughts, the way we see, or how we speak from this world. We draw everything from the Kingdom of God that is within us.

We are learning how to grow up in Christ.

Ephesians 4:14-15 *That we should no longer be children, tossed to and from and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, and **grow up in all things** into Him who is the head – Christ.*

Ephesians 4:20-24 *But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.*

Getting our story straight and growing up in Christ means that we must learn to live from the place of God's nature.

Ephesians 5:1 *Therefore, be imitators of God as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us...*

Ephesians 4:31-32 *Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. AND be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.*

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Awake, you who sleep,
Arise from the dead,
And Christ will give you light.

Ephesians 5:14
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We are growing up in all things Christ. When God looks at us, He is not looking at our behavior. God looks at our placement and our placement is in Christ. Do not allow yourself to be performance driven thinking that it is your performance that pleases God. God is well pleased with your *placement* in Christ! He placed you there. Live from that place!

Galatians 2:20 *I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.*

Before Christ went to the cross, He put us on. He did not just die for us. He died as us.

To see our story change, we must continue to grow in Christ. We must put Him on daily and learn to live from the place that being in Christ and having Christ live in us provides for all believers.

We have an enemy who loves to distract us by getting us to look at our behavior as though our favor or standing with God depends upon our own actions. That same enemy, if he is successful at getting us to look at our performance will spend a great deal of his resources to make us feel less than, below standard, not equal to others, like a failure, never able to measure up. Do not listen to his lies! He comes to distract you by causing you to look at yourself rather than seeing yourself from Heaven's point of view, thinking in line with Heaven's thoughts, and speaking out all that God has done for you in Christ.

Beloved! You have been fearfully and wonderfully made! Ps 139:14

You have a hope and a future! Jer. 29:11

Do not spend time dwelling on who you are or what you are not from the world's point of view. Spend your time; keep your focus on how God sees you. He relates to you according to how you are known in Heaven. Look at your prophetic words. How has He spoken to you? Prophecy is God standing in your future, speaking back to you in the present telling you how He sees you. He is giving you a history lesson before history is written!

All those favorite scriptures you have are not just to underline in your Bible. Those scriptures are God's little "post it" notes to you to remind you of what He has deposited within you and how He wants to relate to you. Look at your prophetic words and favorite scriptures with new eyes!

We are on a journey to find out who we really are in Christ and our focus is fixed on becoming a person who is God's visual aid in the earth. We see like He sees. We think like He thinks. We speak like He speaks. We are learning to walk in the newness of life that being in Christ provides.

God is continually looking at us to see what is missing from our experience with Him. He is never caught off guard when a difficult situation occurs in our life and He sees the opportunity that the situation provides even if we do not initially see it.

As we are growing in Christ, we are learning to see difficulty from Heaven's point of view. We will see that God will provide a new experience with Him throughout the difficulty that we have never before

had. For example, you hear that a company in town is laying off workers and both your husband and son work for the company. Questions begin to form in your heart. How will we pay our mortgage? How will our son care for his young family?

What if God wants to cause you to see Him as your source and not the company? What if He will keep you while you learn to live fully out of your Heavenly inheritance? What if He will be your peace that passes all understanding during this time? And what if the peace you experience changes the atmosphere over the whole town in such a way that God is glorified in every home?

As we are growing up in Christ, we begin to see that the world's solutions to problems is to fix them through creating a solution. Yet when Jesus came, He said, "All things are possible, only believe." (Mark 9:23)

What if there are no problems in Heaven? What if there are only possibilities? Jesus did not come to deal with individual problems. That would be so time consuming! Rather, He said, "All things are possible with God." That means, "Have a problem? Look to see what possibilities are available to you now that you have a 'problem'".

We are growing up in Christ and we are learning to look at every situation from Heaven's great view point. We are asking God for His thoughts on the situation, and we are seeing all the wonderful possibilities that stretch out before us! All things are possible. Believe.

We are growing up in Christ and that means that we do not take our cues from the attitudes of the world around us, we actually can change and shape the attitudes of the world that affect the atmosphere by choosing to live in every situation that comes, with every individual in our lives the way Christ would live with them. We can choose peace over fear. We can choose patience over anger. We can choose love over hatred. We can choose joy over sadness and depression. We can choose kindness over selfishness or greed. We can choose faithfulness over faithlessness. We can choose goodness over evil. (Gal. 5:22-23)

Jesus went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed. When He spoke to a multitude sitting on a hillside, His words unraveled the religious system that held them captive. He pointed them to a new way of life even before He went to the cross. *You have heard it said, but now I say.* Today, He is unraveling that same religious system with us. He has forever changed our story and now we are learning to live our life anew. Go out from this place and do good and heal all who are oppressed. Set the captives free.

PROCLAMATIONS

Note: This two part exercise is designed to change the way you think as you speak proclamations out loud that align you with who you are in Christ. Part one is a proclamation exercise where you will speak statements of truth out loud. In part two, you will take time to write your personal proclamation based on how you are growing up into all things in Christ.

PART 1: READ OUT LOUD, SLOWLY, PURPOSEFULLY

Unlike Gideon, you and I come from a successful household – the household of God. We are the apple of our Father’s eye. We share Divine DNA. We fully share an inheritance with our older brother, Jesus.

Like Joseph and his coat of many colors, we are so favored that all of Heaven is attracted to Jesus within us. We cannot fail because Jesus went before us and won every fight we will face. So not only do we start each fight from the place of victory, we finish as victorious warriors! We are like Joshua and Caleb.

We are strong! We are courageous! We have the same strength today that we did when we first began. Like David, we run to the battle! Fear has no place in us because His perfect love resists fear! We are generous! We have wisdom from Heaven. We pray with God and not towards Him. We are so in tune with Heaven because we are listening in to the Godhead’s conversations. We are never alone in a battle because God is always with us.

We carry His Presence wherever we go! We are fully loved! We are fully funded. We walk in the earth in divine health because there is no sickness in Heaven; therefore, we are always a well person who fights off attacks of sickness.

We are the righteousness of God. Our placement in Christ is sure. Our sins forgiven. Our future resourced. We walk in His peace. We are full of His joy. Lack left. Fear fled. Sickness slid away. Our body is renewed because it is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

We are a friend of God. We are warriors! We are a new creation. We are alive to God! We are the beloved! We are blessed. We are chosen! We are holy! Everything works for us and not against us. We are faithful. We are loyal. We are royal. We are a royal priesthood.

We are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works! We are inseparable from the love of God. We lack nothing. We are peculiar! We are redeemed!

We are a new breed never before seen in the earth. We are His People, called by His Name to show forth His exploits in the earth. The Kingdom of God is within us. His thoughts are our thoughts because we have the mind of Christ. The blood covers us. He Himself is a shield around about us.

He is the Glory and the lifter of our heads. Though a thousand falls at our side and ten thousand at our right hand, it will not come near us! For our focus is on His Majesty and His Reign will never end. Our time has come to arise and to shine for the glory of the Lord has risen upon us! Nations will come to our light and kings will be drawn to the brightness of our dawn. For when God looked for a body of believers, He found us!

We believe! Signs follow us. Demons flee! The lame walk. The blind see. The dead live again! We believe! The joy of the Lord is our strength. We won't back down or wear out. We are in this until the finish. We will shine with His glory and be kind to all we meet.

The Fruit of the Spirit is our portion and marks our character. We are made in His image and we delight in being loving in the face of full blown hatred, kind in the face of rudeness, patient with the impatient, generous to all, long suffering with grace, joyous at all times, peaceful in the midst of the storms of life, faithful when weary, good towards evil and injustice, and above all, we live a life of self-control

Because.....of all the places He could have chosen to live, He chose to live in us.....His People.

PART 2:

Take time to write out your own personal proclamations. You can base it on your prophetic words, favorite scriptures, or parts of what you declared in Part 1 of this exercise.