

INSIGHTS

REIGNING IN LIFE

HELD IN
THE GRIP
OF GRACE

BY DR. DENNIS BURKE



One of the greatest concepts in the Kingdom is the position now held by every believer. Whether young or old, new believer or seasoned saint, no matter the background or past, every child of God has been given the same position in God's presence.

There are several different descriptions in the Word of how God sees us when we become new creations in Christ. One is "sons of God"; another is "saints." But there is one that evokes a sense of holy grandeur: *We are called to be kings in this life.*

The daily grind and the pressures of life can leave you feeling like anything but a king. Many times you may feel more like a jester in the king's court than a king yourself! But this is the spiritual reality that the Bible presents: You have been translated out of darkness into the Kingdom of God's Son — and now *reigning in life* is to be your normal mode of operation.

Romans 5:16–18 in *The Passion Translation* gives a powerful picture of this:

"And this free-flowing gift imparts to us much more than what was given to us through the one who sinned. For because of one transgression, we are all facing a death sentence with a verdict of 'Guilty!' But this gracious gift leaves us free from our many failures and brings us into the perfect righteousness of God—acquitted with the words 'Not guilty!'

Death once held us in its grip, and by the blunder of one man, death reigned as king over humanity. But now, how much more are we *held in the grip of grace* and continue reigning as kings in life, enjoying our regal freedom through the gift of perfect righteousness in the one and only Jesus, the Messiah!"

In other words, just as condemnation came upon all people through one transgression, so through one righteous act of Jesus' sacrifice, the perfect righteousness that makes us right with God and leads us to a victorious life that is now available to all.



“

He is not condemning us — He has completely and utterly forgiven us. This freedom opens up a new kind of boldness. **We are bold to be and to do all He has envisioned for us.**”

Once held by death — spiritual death — we all have found ourselves lacking on various levels in life. Every time we take a step forward, something comes along to knock us back. Our life is held in a grip. It may be the grip of despair and depression, or it may be that life has just become dull and lost its sparkle.

All of these and much more are the result of mankind's condition. Man without God is held in the grip of the source of his destruction. Sin and death reigns, engaged in a constant bid to kill, steal, and destroy.

The distance between every person and our Heavenly Father is impossible to bridge. It all started with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Their transgression brought every person into their place of failure and distance from God.

But what one man did to make us all guilty, another man, God's perfect Man, “un-did.” Jesus did all that would be necessary to provide the grace to change every single one of us. We were held in the grip of death, but we are now *held in the grip of God's grace.*

As a result of this grace, we can live differently because we are free to reign. Rather than life “raining on” us — we can *reign* in life.

Reigning in Life Requires Revelation of Grace and Righteousness

When we embrace the fact that the power of God's grace is born within, we begin to experience what is already ours as His children — free access to all the resources of His greatness. We have the inborn substance to stand up to every threat or attack with His strength.

The Apostle Paul said it this way:

“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Romans 5:1–2).

“The grace in which we stand” is a gift we access by faith. In other words, *faith accesses what grace provides.* This is one of the greatest concepts God has given to us. It's the summary of how a person really reigns and rules in the situations faced in life. When we approach God and His Word in faith, He deals with us according to His grace.

Notice that justification by faith is the premise of it all. Justification is God giving His righteousness to every one of us who receives Jesus as Savior. It means He is not seeing us in the light of our sins or failings. He looks on us in the light of all Jesus had done.



Many times in the Word, the Father declared that He would not remember our sins or lawlessness (Psalm 103:11–12; Isaiah 43:26). He is not condemning us — He has completely and utterly forgiven us.

This freedom opens up a new kind of boldness. We are bold to be and to do all He has envisioned for us.

There are four concepts that are vital to reigning in life.

1. Thinking His Thoughts — Maintain a New Perspective

Our thoughts and inner dialogue shape our outlook and perspective about everything. It is so easy to allow our perspective to be fed by people's opinions, our experiences, or our emotions.

We are to think the things that are in harmony with God's way of doing things. But too often we allow hurtful thoughts of past conversations, failures, insecurities, or other destructive ideas to fill our minds. Once those ideas surface in our thoughts, they can bring a flood of negative memories that reinforce this destructive slide into an emotionally dark place.

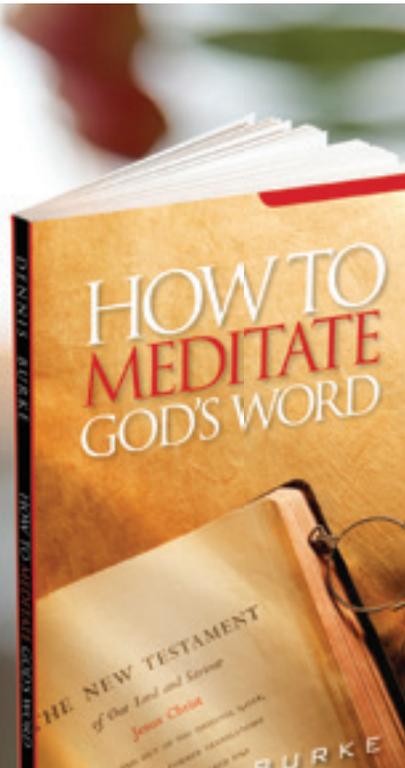
IMAGINE ON THE INSIDE

BECOME ON THE OUTSIDE

True meditation will give you understanding of God, His ways and His Word. As you begin to meditate on the Word, you will know how to walk in what God is revealing to you. **Whatever you can truly imagine on the inside of you, can become a reality on the outside.**

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God's way is to meditate on Him and His Word. Psalm 1:2-3 in the *Message Bible* says, "...You thrill to God's Word, you chew on Scriptures day and night. You're a tree replanted in Eden, bearing fresh fruit every month, never dropping a leaf, always in blossom."

In my book, *How to Meditate God's Word*, I point out that there are a variety of ways to meditate. The practice of meditating on God's Word is not an option in your walk with God. It's a vital ingredient to help you sustain your position of reigning in life when you're in the midst of challenging or difficult situations.

Philippians 4:8 (*Message*) tells you exactly how you are to think so you keep your mind continually guarded and going in the right direction:

"Summing it all up, friends, I'd say you'll do best by filling your minds and meditating on things true, noble, reputable, authentic, compelling, gracious — the best, not the worst; the beautiful, not the ugly; things to praise, not things to curse."

2. Feeling His Feelings — Compassion

We have been made to have feelings. Our emotions are a beautiful part of God's great design. We feel love, happiness, contentment, and peace. On the other hand, we can also feel anger, disappointment, depression, and despair.

As you go through life, you learn that your feelings can easily betray you. If they are not guarded by a strong spirit and undergirded by a steady intake of God's Word, your emotions can easily dominate your thinking and push you into doing or saying things that you may regret.

Every time we give in to our negative feelings, we will find ourselves losing our godly perspective and sinking to a low level in whatever situation we're facing. Yet our emotions can be a powerful blessing when we allow God to help us to experience *His* feelings. His feelings of compassion and empathy will move us into actions that will reach out to someone in need.

3. Praying His Prayers — Spirit-Led Prayer

When the Holy Spirit sets a "prayer target" in your spirit, He is leading you to pray. It seems that God does nothing without someone praying. He will literally give you *His* prayers to be prayed. In prayer, we are laying hold of His promise and praying it into existence.

4. Speaking His Words — Releasing His Creative Power

A Roman centurion once told Jesus to only speak a word and he would be assured that the power in that word would produce the healing needed in his servant's body. This centurion understood authority and the power that words carry.

We have God's Word, which contains the ultimate power. As we speak His Word in faith, we will see His miraculous power activated to bring about His will in a specific situation.

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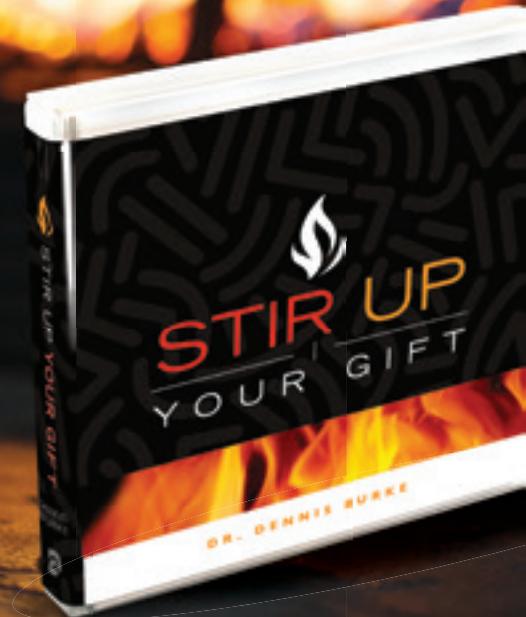
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Paul teaches the divine sequence in Second Corinthians 4:13 (NCF). We believe, and therefore we speak.

“It is written in the Scriptures, ‘I believed, so I spoke.’
 Our faith is like this, too. We believe, and so we speak.”

When we declare God’s Word by faith and govern our

conversations by His Word, we release real power for divine action. Like kings, we decree the will of the King of kings, and something supernatural is set in motion.

This is the way you are to operate in every realm during your time on this earth. You are in the grip of God’s grace. You are made to reign in life. You are called to show what His goodness and love actually look like in the life of a believer!

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