

For he has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of his dear Son... [and] now he has reconciled you to himself through the death of Christ in his physical body. As a result, he has brought you into his own presence, and you are holy and blameless as you stand before him without a single fault. (Colossians 1: 12, 22 NLT)

I don't really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do what I hate. But if I know that what I am doing is wrong, this shows that I agree that the law is good. (Romans 7:15-16 NLT)

How can it be I am at once standing holy and blameless before God and yet at the same time, find myself doing the very thing that I do not want to do? How can what Paul write in Colossians and Romans be true at the same time?

In Colossians 1 Paul is writing about the Christian's position or standing before God – our relationship to God. In Romans 7 Paul is writing about the Christian's state or walk with God – our fellowship with God.

Know this, our standing with God is the position in which God places us in His sight because of the finished work of Jesus Christ. Consequently, whether we have constant victory over sin or whether we find ourselves constantly falling into sin, it does not affect our standing, our position, before God. Think of it this way; if my son spends the rest of his life robbing banks he is still my son. If he spends the rest of his life in a monastery praying 20 hours a day, he is still my son. His standing before me, his relationship to me, is not affected by what he does or does not do.

On the other hand, the state of our fellowship is a different matter. If he insists on robbing banks, I have nothing to say to him except STOP and get yourself together. Do not get me wrong, I still love him, I just cannot be in fellowship with him. And so it is with God. The God we serve is a Holy God and he cannot dwell in the presence of sin (Psalms 5:4 & 5). So though we may be the children of God positionally when we sin, we jeopardize our fellowship with God when we do. The good news is, when we sin, we have an advocate with God our Father, so that when we ask for forgiveness, we can know that God will hear us and forgive us (1 John 8 – 1 John 2:2 and Hebrews 10:19-23). When we ask for forgiveness and God forgives us. Our fellowship, our state, is restored.

Because there can be a difference between our standing before God and our state, the devil will try and make you doubt your salvation. He will get you to take your eyes off Christ, and what Christ has done, and place your eyes on your current state and what you are doing, on what sin you are struggling with. Satan wants you to focus on what you are in the flesh rather than on who you are in Christ. (I need to re-write that!) Satan wants you to focus on what you are doing in the flesh rather than on who you are in Christ. Listen, Satan knows that though he cannot take us out of our Father's hand, he can take away some of the glory and praise God would receive if we as Christians were convinced of our salvation through the work of Christ.

Though our standing as the children of God can never be improved upon by what we do or diminished by what we do, we are nonetheless, to work out (not for) our salvation. Paul writes to the Christians in Philippi:

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Dear friends, you always followed my instructions when I was with you. And now that I am away, it is even more important. Work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear. For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.
(Philippians 2:12-13 NLT)

Our standing is established upon our new life in Christ and that standing in Christ is based on God's love, mercy and grace. It is not based on what we are in the flesh but on what we are in Christ. Furthermore, it is not even what you think about yourself but what Christ thinks about you that matters when it comes to your salvation. So we work hard at showing the results of having Christ in your life but know if you fall, your relationship as a child of God does not change.

Be Blessed.