Summary

a) This session is the eighth of ten sessions that looks at a vital principle that fosters Spirit-led living.

b) The eighth principle that we will examine is this: You must rely upon the indwelling Spirit to align your living condition—how much you experience of the finished work of the cross—to your legal position in Christ.

Your Legal Position Versus Your Living Condition

a) The table below details the difference between your legal position and your living condition.

Legal Position	Living Condition
Your legal position is what Christ finished for you on the cross.	Your living condition is what the Spirit has finished in your spirit and is now finishing in your heart, soul, and body.
Your legal position hinges on identification.	Your living condition depends upon experience.
Your legal position is constituted, imputed, and reckoned.	Your living condition is life-based, actualized, and incarnated.
Your legal position is an accomplished fact.	Your living condition is determined by faith in this accomplished fact.

b) Your legal position in Christ is the result of three realities:

1. You are in Christ by God's doing;
2. Jesus Christ is your representative in the new covenant;
3. You were baptized into the body of Jesus Christ at new birth.

c) Remember the four illustrations of what it means to be in Christ.

1. A passenger in an airplane.
2. A SIM card in a phone.
3. A husband and wife in marriage.
4. Hawaii became the fiftieth state.

Your Legal Position Is Not Enough

a) In Christ, you are righteous, crucified, buried, resurrected, ascended, and enthroned.

b) This is your legal position because you are in Christ by God's doing, Christ is your representative in the new covenant, and you were baptized into His body at new birth.

c) As the Lord gives you revelation of your legal position in Christ and as you meditate upon this truth regularly, the Holy Spirit begins aligning your living condition with your legal position.

d) He enables you to experience what Jesus Christ purchased for you on the cross.

e) You see, it is not enough to be positionally righteous yet still struggle with sin. The Holy Spirit wants you to live righteously and to overcome sin.

f) It is not enough to be positionally crucified with Christ yet still live for yourself. The Holy Spirit wants to crucify every form of selfishness in you.

g) It is not enough for you to be positionally resurrected yet still wallow around in defeat, discouragement, and death. The Holy Spirit wants you to live by the same power that raised Jesus from the dead.

Experiencing What Christ Finished on the Cross

a) Your living condition is how much you actually *experience* of your legal position, which is freely available to you *if you want it*.

b) Though Christ has finished the work once and for all on the cross, the results in your experience are ongoing.

c) This was true for Paul, who continued to grow into who he already was by the initial implanting of the Spirit into his spirit. For example, near the beginning of his ministry, Paul said, "I have been crucified with Christ" (Gal. 2:20). This statement expressed the truth of his legal position.

d) Many years later, Paul wanted to know "the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death" so that he could "attain to the resurrection from the dead" (Phil. 3:10-11). This statement expressed Paul's desire to experience greater alignment in his living condition.

e) Paul also said, "For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3). This is your legal position in Christ through the finished work of the cross.

f) Though powerful, it is not enough to overcome the inherent selfishness in your unrenewed soul and unredeemed body. That is why Paul also said two verses later, "Put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry" (Col. 3:5 NKJV).

g) "You have died" is your legal position. "Put to death" is your living condition.

h) Much of the Christian journey is becoming what you already are in Christ. You have died therefore you must die. You are righteous therefore you must live righteously. You have been crucified therefore you need to be conformed to Christ's death. You have been resurrected therefore you must live by His resurrection life.

i) If you will ask for and allow the Holy Spirit to actualize the finished work of the cross in your daily experience, you will experience more of Christ's indwelling life in your heart, soul, and body, conforming you more into the image of Christ.

Alignment Keeps You from Veering

a) A car can get out of alignment from a sudden disturbance, such as hitting a pothole, bumping into a curb, going too fast over a speed bump, or from an accident.

b) When your car is out of alignment, it will cause your car to veer in one direction or vibrate over certain speeds.

c) If the problem is not corrected quickly, the tires will suffer premature wear and tear, making them unsafe. You also risk being pulled in the wrong direction, either to the right or left.

d) Like a car, when your living condition is out of alignment with your legal position, you can easily veer in the wrong direction. Pulled by your flesh or soul, you can veer off the straight and narrow path of living by Christ's indwelling life.

e) That's why closing the gap between your legal position and your living condition is so vital. That's why this session is so important.

The Purpose of This Message

a) In this message, I will describe *how* to align your living condition with your legal position.

b) More specifically, I will show how revelation of this truth and meditation upon this truth activates faith. And as Scripture states, faith substantiates (Heb. 11:1, DBY), giving shape and form to the truth of who you are in Christ in your personal experience.

c) One note before moving on. As I unpack some of the nitty-gritty details of closing the gap between your legal position and your living condition, I encourage you to pay close attention. This concept has real practical value to your everyday life, even if at first it seems like a theological theory.

d) In addition, this truth is much deeper than you might initially realize. This means you might need to read the notes and listen to this message more than once.

e) It most definitely means you need to prayerfully rely upon the Holy Spirit for spiritual understanding—not just mental comprehension.

f) In fact, I encourage you to take a second now and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the truth to you as you read these notes and listen to this message.

Take Possession of the Land

a) Your living condition aligned to your legal position is similar to Israel taking possession of the promised land.

b) The Lord told Israel,

> Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours; your border will be from the wilderness to Lebanon, and from the river, the river Euphrates, as far as the western sea. No man will be able to stand before you; the LORD your God will lay the dread of you and the fear of you on all the land on which you set foot, as He has spoken to you. (Deut. 11:24-25)

c) From the onset, the Lord promised the land of Canaan to Israel. He vowed to give them the land from the wilderness to Lebanon and from the Euphrates River to the western sea. This was their promised inheritance, guaranteed by God's direct pledge.

d) Just as the Lord promised Israel the land of Canaan, God has declared you are righteous, crucified, buried, resurrected, ascended, and enthroned in Christ. This is a settled fact, regardless of what you think, how you feel, or whether or not you know it or believe it. It's done. Finished.

e) Back to Israel and the Promised Land, the ancient Hebrews still had a solemn responsibility to take possession of the land even though the Lord promised it to them.

f) The Lord would direct and empower them and even fight on their behalf, but Israel had to shoulder the burden of responsibility.

g) This meant Israel had to believe the Lord's promise, wait on the Lord's direction for each city, obey what He said, and fight the enemy.

h) If Israel had the mindset of sitting back and waiting passively for the Lord to act because he said He would do it, then they never would have taken possession.

i) If Israel didn't believe the Lord's promise, they would die in the wilderness, which, of course, many did.

Actualize Your Legal Position by Faith

a) Applying the principle of taking possession of the land to your living condition, even though the Lord has declared you righteous, crucified, buried, resurrected, ascended, and enthroned in Christ, you still have to believe it, meditate upon it, and fight for victory from this position.

b) Even though the Lord "is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure," you have the responsibility to "work out your salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12).

c) As you begin taking possession of your land—working out your salvation from your spirit into your heart, soul, and body—the indwelling Spirit closes the gap between your legal position and your living condition.

d) The indwelling Spirit begins actualizing within you what Jesus finished for you on the cross, taking what is true about you in Christ and making it real in your experience.

e) What does this look like?

- Because you are crucified in Christ, the Spirit *actually* begins putting your flesh to death.
- Because you are resurrected in Christ, the Spirit has *actually* raised your spirit from the dead, made you alive to God, and is now releasing His resurrection life into the rest of your being.
- Because you have ascended with Christ and are seated with Him in heavenly places, the Spirit *actually* gives you authority and power to reign in life.
- Because you are more than a conqueror in Christ, the Spirit *actually* empowers you to overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil.
- Because you are righteous in Christ, the Spirit has *actually* made your spirit righteous and is now in the process of making your heart, soul, and body righteous, holy, and Christlike.

f) Your legal position is the basis from which the indwelling Spirit actualizes the finished work of Christ in your spirit, heart, soul, and body.

Faith in the Finished Work of the Cross

a) Often, when people think of faith, they think of looking forward and trusting God to fulfill a promise in the future, perhaps for a breakthrough in their health, finances, or a relationship.

b) Though reckoning is a form of faith, it doesn't look forward but backward. It doesn't trust God to do something. It believes God has already done it.

c) Reckoning is not forward-looking faith for something to happen but backward-looking confidence in an already settled and established fact.

d) Whereas forward-looking faith says *God can* or *God will*, reckoning says *God has already done it*.

Faith Substantiates

a) The Darby translation of Hebrews 11:1 says, "Now faith is the substantiating of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." Notice faith substantiates.

b) In relation to a future promise, faith substantiates the promise by waiting patiently until it comes to pass and is made real in your experience.

c) In relation to an established fact, faith substantiates what is true of you in Christ, paving the way for the Spirit to make it true in your experience.

d) Faith substantiates by preparing the way for the Spirit to align your living condition with your legal position. Faith makes the real things real in your heart, soul, and body. This is what Paul meant by reckoning.

e) To reckon you are dead to sin and alive to God, therefore, means to actualize the finished work of the cross by faith into your personal experience, knowing you are not dealing with promises but with facts.

f) Promises are usually conditional, dependent upon your faith and obedience. Facts are unconditional, for they are true whether or not you believe them.

g) If you are having a bad day, lose your temper, or don't feel as if you are dead to sin and alive to God, you still are. If you slip, stumble, and fall, and then claim you really aren't dead to sin and alive to God, you still are.

h) God's established facts are true whether or not you feel them, comprehend them, or believe them.

i) Faith does not make the finished work of the cross real, for it has been real for over two thousand years. Faith makes the finished work of the cross real in your life.

j) Faith actualizes what Jesus did for you on the cross in your personal experience. Faith makes who you are in Christ who you become by divine life.

k) Even though God's established facts are true they have no value to you if you don't substantiate them by faith.

How Do You Do It?

a) Now the burning questions are:

1. What do you need to do for this to take place?

2. How do you initiate the Spirit's work of actualizing your legal position in Christ?

b) There are at least two steps in this process:

1. Knowing your legal position in Christ by revelation;

2. Meditating on your legal position until your faith is activated.

c) As you follow these two steps, the Spirit begins actualizing within you everything Christ finished for you on the cross. Let's look at these two steps now.

Knowing By Revelation

a) If you are unaware that you died with Christ when He died and were resurrected with Christ when He was raised from the dead, the Spirit is hindered from making this real in your experience. As a result, sin, self, and the law will master you.

b) In Romans 6, Paul used the words "know" or "knowing" four times. Three times he wanted us to really know a life-changing truth. The three truths he wanted us to know are: (1) You were baptized into Christ's death (Rom. 6:3); (2) You were crucified with Him (Rom. 6:6); and (3) You are slaves of whomever you obey (Rom. 6:16).

c) It takes revelation of your death and resurrection in Christ for faith to be awakened in your heart. That is why Paul asked the Roman believers, "*Do you not know* that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?" (Rom. 6:3, emphasis mine).

d) Obviously, this was a rhetorical question, designed to awaken awareness within the hearts of the first-century Romans. Paul knew the life-changing impact of knowing your legal position in Christ by revelation, so he pressed this issue with the Romans, wanting them to also know.

e) When Paul asked *do you not know*, he was not talking about knowing facts in your head. He was alluding to knowing truth by revelation in your heart. He was talking about having eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand.

f) For your legal position in Christ to be actualized within you, you first need a personal revelation that you were crucified when Christ was crucified, you died when Christ died, and you were resurrected when He was raised from the dead.

g) How do you receive this personal revelation? Begin asking the Lord for a spirit of wisdom and revelation of your legal position in Christ while you meditate upon and confess this truth. Keep doing this until the truth of your legal position in Christ is awakened within you. Persevere until the truth of your legal position in Christ pulsates with life in your heart, eventually pumping outward into your mind, emotions, choices, and actions.

h) Later in his same letter to the Romans Paul stated it slightly differently: *"Knowing this*, that our old self was crucified with Him" (Rom. 6:6, emphasis mine). Notice the past tense—your old self *was* crucified with Him. This crucifixion is not something you do to yourself, for it was a final, once-and-for-all work God completed almost two-thousand years ago when you were included in Christ's historical crucifixion.

i) Your co-crucifixion with Christ is a divine fact and a settled issue. It doesn't matter if you believe it, feel it, or understand it. If you are in Christ, God deals with you on the legal basis that you were included in Christ when He was crucified, buried, and resurrected.

j) Just as Jesus bore your *sins* on the cross, He also bore *you* on the cross.[1] Just as your *sins* were imputed to Jesus on the cross, *you* were also imputed to Jesus on the cross.

k) Therefore, when God says you have died in Christ, then you have died in Christ. It does not depend upon your feelings or your mental capacity to comprehend.

l) If God says it, then it is a divine fact and a settled issue. When God says you have been crucified in Christ, then you have been crucified in Christ. You can never be un-crucified.

Reckon Yourself Dead to Sin and Alive to God

a) For your legal position to be actualized within you, knowing must lead to reckoning, which is another term for meditation. Paul said, "Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6:11 NKJV).

b) Knowing your co-crucifixion with Christ by revelation naturally leads to reckoning yourself dead to sin and alive to God.

c) To see the connection between knowing and reckoning more clearly, read Romans 6:6 together with 6:11: "*Knowing* this, that our old man was crucified. . . . *Reckon* yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6:6, 11 NKJV, emphasis mine).

d) *Reckon* in the Greek is *logizomai,* and it means "to consider or regard*,* whether by calculation or imputation."[2]

e) If you are responsible for managing the books of a business, you know it is necessary to have a certified accountant involved because it can be a very complicated and arduous process. Everything has to be precise, balanced, and error-free.

f) Just as accountants use their minds continuously to calculate taxes, debt, and the balance sheet of a business, you are to use your mind to reckon yourself dead to sin and alive to God by deep and thoughtful meditation.

g) Reckoning involves aligning your thoughts with the established fact that you died when Christ died, and your spirit has been resurrected at new birth. It's easy to forget these two facts in the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

Avoid Spiritual Amnesia

a) If you don't regularly meditate upon your legal position in Christ and what He has finished in your spirit, you will naturally forget what God has done.

b) This is why many have spiritual amnesia and are groping around depressed and downcast, because they have forgotten who they are, what Jesus finished for them on the cross, and what the Spirit finished for them in their spirits.

c) This is why you need to reckon yourself dead to sin and alive to God frequently through focused and purposeful meditation.

d) In your prayer time, start a conversation with the Lord, thanking Him that you have died to sin, died with Christ, and that your spirit has been resurrected. Say it out loud or write it down in a notebook. Ponder these glorious truths until faith rises up in your heart. Think deeply upon the reality that you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

e) Keep on meditating upon this truth *until* you have all the emotions of it being true within your heart—until the revelation given to Paul becomes your own personal revelation.

Your Mind Is the Battlefield

a) Even though you have died and have been resurrected with Christ, your thoughts will lie to you, saying, "Nothing really happened. That is just a meaningless, impractical, religious creed. You are still the same person you have always been." Your mind is the battlefield.

b) At this point, you need to double down, refocusing your mind on the truth of God's Word. Through meditation, keep on reckoning the death of the Lord Jesus as your own death and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus as your own resurrection.

c) Disregard your feelings, your experience, and your opinions. If God says your flesh is crucified, then your flesh is crucified. It is an established fact and a settled issue.

d) Keep speaking it or writing it until a breakthrough of faith comes, you believe what God says about you, and the indwelling Spirit begins to crucify your flesh by His power. When this happens, you will shift from living by the soul to living by the spirit.

e) When Paul said to *reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God*, he basically wanted you to agree with what God has done for you in Christ.

f) In God's eyes, He sees you crucified, buried, dead, resurrected, ascended, enthroned, and victorious. He sees you as righteous and complete.

g) To Him you are dead to sin, self, and the law. He sees you as resurrected, raised up far above all demonic power and authority, seated in the heavenlies, and an overcomer. This is how God sees you in Christ—and it's how you need to see yourself in Him. Reckoning is how you do this.

h) Reckoning is agreeing with these truths, personalizing these truths, and believing these truths.

Remember Who You Are

a) Reckoning you are dead to sin and alive to God is not a brainwashing technique designed to convince you of something that is not real.

b) Reckoning is not claiming you have $1,000,000 in your retirement account when you only have $10,000. No matter how much you reckon, you cannot turn the $10,000 you actually have into the $1,000,000 you need. Even if you reckon to yourself, "I have $1,000,000. I have $1,000,000. I have $1,000,000," your retirement account will not change in the slightest way. Reckoning does not magically turn $10,000 into $1,000,000, making what is untrue true.

c) Reckoning is not pretending your old nature has died, hoping you can somehow stop sinning. Nor is reckoning acting as if you have been resurrected when your spirit is still dead.

d) Rather, reckoning is acting on your faith. It is aligning your thoughts, confessions, and actions with the truth of what God's Word has clearly revealed.

e) Paul said to reckon yourself dead to sin and alive to God—not so you might magically die and be resurrected but because you have in fact died when Christ died and been resurrected the moment you were born again. God never tells you to reckon what is not an established fact. You reckon because you really are dead to sin and really are alive to God.

f) Reckoning is not pretense but a call to remembrance and reflection. A regular dose of reckoning helps you overcome spiritual amnesia, keeping who you are in Christ at the forefront of your mind.

g) In his commentary on the book of Romans, John Stott described the advice King George V gave to his son:

> On 28 May 1972 the Duke of Windsor, the uncrowned King Edward VIII, died in Paris. The same evening a television program rehearsed the main events of his life. Extracts from earlier films were shown, in which he answered questions about his upbringing, brief reign, and abdication. Recalling his boyhood as Prince of Wales, he said: "My father [King George V] was a strict disciplinarian. Sometimes when I had done something wrong, he would admonish me saying, 'My dear boy, *you must always remember who you are*.'"[3]

h) Like Simba and King Edward VIII, reckoning yourself dead to sin and alive to God is an act of remembering who you truly are.

i) You have been crucified, buried, and resurrected. You are dead to sin, to self, and to the law. You are righteous, complete, and an overcomer in Christ.

j) No matter how you think, feel, or presently see yourself, reckoning helps you remember who you truly are. Reckoning is aligning your thoughts with the truth of who God says you are in Christ.

The Secret Power of Meditation

a) If you learn to meditate on your legal position in Christ, it will change your living condition.

b) I have discovered meditation to be one of the secret keys to living by Christ's indwelling life. Meditation always determines your orientation, whether you live from your spirit, soul, or body.

c) If you establish a regular practice of reflecting upon who God says you are in Christ, your spirit will grow strong, faith will awaken in your heart, and your flesh will weaken. You will naturally become who you already are in Christ.

d) As you purposefully recall, ponder, grasp, and reflect upon your legal position in Christ, your living condition begins to align with your legal position. You begin experiencing metamorphosis, a transformation into the likeness and image of Christ in your heart and soul.

e) I encourage you to remind yourself often of who you are in Christ. On a daily basis in prayer, whether you are in the car, cutting the grass, walking the dog, or locked away in the secret place with the Lord, reflect deeply upon your union with Christ in His death, resurrection, ascension, enthronement, and victory.

f) Don't do this for two days and then quit. Make it a regular part of your prayer life. Establish it in your conversations with the Lord. Confess these truths repeatedly until your mind aligns with the reality in your spirit.

g) Over time, if you continue practicing this type of meditation, Satan's lies will dissipate, and your unbelief will dissolve. Then your actual living condition will align with your legal position in Christ.

h) Divine alignment is established by meditating on your legal position until faith rises up in your heart and the Spirit makes it real in your experience, closing the gap between who you are in Christ and who Christ is in you. This enables you to drive straight ahead without drifting to the right or left.

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[1] Watchman Nee inspired this statement. See Nee, *The Normal Christian Life*, location 486-545 in the Kindle app.
[2] "G3049 - logizomai - Outline of Biblical Usage (nasb95)." Blue Letter Bible. Accessed 14 Jun, 2022. https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/g3049/nasb95/mgnt/0-1/.
[3] John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Romans* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994), pp 187-188, emphasis mine.