

CHAPTER 12

Where Are You Standing?

How can I deal with my problems? How can I handle them? The old problems must be dealt with by the **new person**:

"Therefore, if any man be in _____, he is a _____: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become _____" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

See also Galatians 6:15 and Ephesians 2:10.

The believer is a new creature in Christ. The words "new creature in Christ" means that the believer is a **new creation**. Something has happened that required nothing short of a miracle by the Creator. In the middle of the mess God has come to create something brand new! In the middle of the problems and rubble and chaos and confusion, God is doing something. In the midst of it all, God is putting down a new foundation for the believer to stand upon. God is the great BUILDER. We are "GOD'S CREATION" and we are founded...

...in Christ.

...upon Christ.

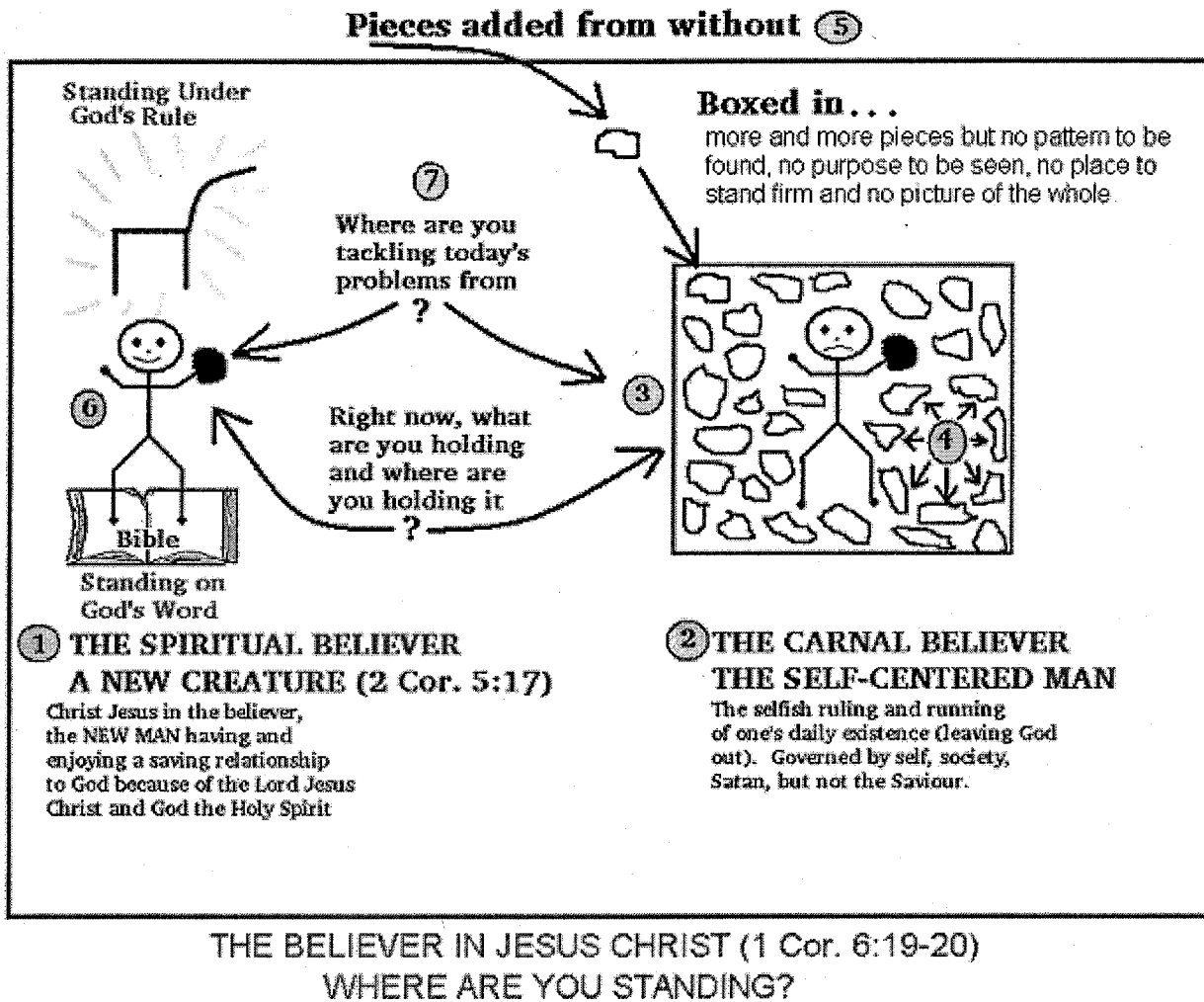
...by Christ.

...for Christ.

...under Christ.

The problem is that very often we fail to stand on that solid foundation that God has provided in Christ Jesus, and we try to tackle our problems the old way instead of God's **new way**.

The chart on the following page shows us that the believer has **a choice** as to where he will stand. In this chapter we will seek to understand this chart and how we can use it in our own day by day living.



The following numbers correspond to the numbers found in the above chart:

(1) THE SPIRITUAL BELIEVER

The spiritual believer is under the influence of his or her *new nature* (2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:10; 4:24; Colossians 3:10). The spiritual believer is the believer who is in a right relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. This person is rightly related to God. This person does not leave God out of his life, but God is the very center of his day by day living (see 1 Corinthians 10:31).

(2) THE CARNAL BELIEVER

The carnal believer is under the influence of his or her *old nature* (Romans 8:7; Galatians 5:16-17). This person is self-centered and does not walk in the Spirit (Gal. 5:16). The carnal believer leaves God out of his life and thinking, and he lives a "self-centered" life.

Did you know that your old nature (that old, fleshly, sinful nature which you inherited from Adam) hates God? See Romans 8:7. The old nature is **against** God. The old nature considers

God an enemy. The old nature is at war against God! Paul said, "For I know that *in me* (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth N_____ G_____ T_____ " (Romans 7:18). Paul knew this about himself. Do you know this about yourself?

(3) IN THE BOX

The carnal believer is boxed in! He is surrounded by PIECES (problems, places, persons, etc.). He is trying to deal with his problems without trusting God and without looking to God or to God's Word. As you look at the chart, you will notice that there is no stable place for his feet to stand upon.

Every unsaved person is in this box. There is no other place for him to be (until he is saved). If a believer is in this box, he is there because he *chooses* to be there. It is not a good place to be.

As a person grows older, more and more pieces come into the box. Let's think about these pieces and what they represent:

(4) SURROUNDED BY PIECES

What are these items or pieces surrounding the person? Here's what the pieces are:

EXPERIENCES which the person has had

FEELINGS which the person has had (or is now having)

THE PAST with its memories

THE PRESENT with its difficulties and challenges

THE FUTURE with its uncertainties

ALL THAT ONE HAS THOUGHT

ALL THAT ONE HAS EXPERIENCED

ALL THAT ONE HAS FELT

The older the person gets the more pieces there are that gather around him. As the days and months pass by, the pile gets bigger and bigger. The person is surrounded by all these pieces. As the person sees the pieces and thinks about the pieces, there is no pattern to be found, no purpose to be seen, and no picture of the whole.

Pieces also come from the outside. This brings us to our next point:

(5) *PIECES ADDED FROM WITHOUT*

The people about us usually add to our pieces. Your parents add pieces. Your teacher in school adds pieces. Your friends add pieces. Your foes add pieces. The news you get from the media adds more pieces to the pile (world events, etc.). The pile gets bigger.

Situations can also be adding to our pile. Things such as **worries, woes, wails, wants, needs, demands**—all of these things (and many more) add to the growing pile.

(6) *A SAFE AND SOLID PLACE TO STAND!*

The believer does not have to stay in the box! The believer does not have to be boxed in forever! The believer should wake up and say, "**I'm a new creature in Christ! I have a great God over me! I have a solid foundation under my feet! I have a stable and solid place to stand!**"

The believer has a very solid place to stand (see Ephesians 6:11,13,14). The believer has a relationship to God that provides him with **VICTORY** ("thanks be unto God, which _____ causeth us to T _____ in Christ"—see 2 Cor.2:14) and for **BLESSING** ("Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath _____ us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ"—see Eph. 1:3). The **VICTORY** and the **BLESSINGS** are to be found *in Christ*, not *in the box*!

We should remember that the problems and the pile still remain. God does not fix or remove the pile. It is the same *old pile* (same problems, same persons, same parents, same teachers, etc.), but it's a **NEW ME** (a **NEW CREATURE**)! In the middle of the problems and rubble and chaos and confusion God wants to do something. I need to stand in the right place and watch God work it all out!

THE CHOICE IS YOURS TO MAKE!

FROM WHICH POSITION ARE YOU GOING TO TACKLE TODAY? FROM WHICH POSITION WILL YOU TACKLE 9:00 A.M. TOMORROW? Will you tackle your life from the old box or from your new relationship with Christ? You must choose! Take your pick! As believers we need to learn to exercise our relationship to the Lord and stand in the right place.

RIGHT NOW, WHAT ARE YOU HOLDING AND WHERE ARE YOU HOLDING IT? Notice the two people in the chart (the one in the box and the other on God's Word). Both of these people are holding something in their hand. What are you holding right now? What problem or concern is on your mind right now? What is bothering you right now? What are you holding in your hand? Are you holding it in the old box, or are you holding it while standing on that solid foundation?

Are you holding it, or is it holding you? Sometimes you might think you are holding the problem when the problem is really holding you! You think you have a problem, but the problem really has you! You need to ask yourself: "**AM I THE MASTER OF MY PROBLEM, OR AM I A SLAVE OF MY PROBLEM?**" Read Luke 18:22-23. Did this man hold wealth or did wealth hold him? _____

Was he able to let it go?

You must *identify* what is in your hand. Recognize it. What is the thing you are holding and where did it come from (see Chapters 3 and 4)? Label the problem and think about it. Ask yourself, "Why is this thing on my mind? What am I doing with it? What is it doing to me?" Most of the time we just feel (get emotional--mad, sad, glad), and we don't think!

What are you going to do with the thing that is in your hand? Something becomes a problem only if you do not have the resources to meet it and solve it. If I do not have the resources, then the smallest thing can cripple me. If I have the resources, then even the biggest problem is only an *incident* (something that has to be handled at a given moment in time). Do I have the resources (see Chapters 7-11)?

Someone has said, "IF THE ONLY TOOL YOU HAVE IS A HAMMER, THEN YOU TEND TO SEE EVERY PROBLEM AS A NAIL." A hammer is a good tool for hitting something real hard, but it would not be very good for a person to try to drive in a screw with a hammer. That's the wrong tool! Neither would you want to drill a hole by using a hammer!

Many believers have a very limited toolbox. God has given the believer all kinds of special tools to handle all kinds of problems. God has provided a whole tool chest for every problem and situation the believer will ever face. As we stand in the right place (left side of the chart – number 6), we need to begin to learn how to use the right tools for the right problems.

WILL THE THING IN YOUR HAND MAKE YOU CHANGE THE PLACE WHERE YOU ARE STANDING? Suppose you are standing on God's Word (left side of chart). Will a problem come along that will make you move back to the box (maybe some bad news or a phone call or something your parents say or something that happens at school)?

Or, you could be in the box (right side of the chart) and something could make you move to the other side. For example, your mother could be involved in a car accident that might cause you to turn to the Lord and begin trusting Him in the middle of this situation.

You must choose where you will stand. It is up to you. If you are standing on the wrong side, you have no one to blame but yourself. If you are a believer and if you are in the old box, then by an act of your will you can switch over to the other side. You can say "NO" to the flesh (old nature), and you can say "YES" to God. Remember, the old nature is an *enemy*. It must be defeated! Thank God, it *has been* defeated already (Romans 6:6)! Read Romans 8:8.

According to Romans 8:8, is it possible to please God *in the box*? _____ Where are you going to be—in the old box or standing on God's Word? You must choose! When you are in school, are you going to be in the box or on the Bible? When you brush your teeth, where are you going to be? Take your pick! You must make a decision: "I AM GOING TO TRUST ALMIGHTY GOD **NOW**, AND I AM GOING TO STAND ON HIS WORD!" Don't live a PING PONG kind of life (going back and forth from the box to God).

Some believers stand in the box for so long that it has become a HABIT! They are so used to being in the box that it is difficult to break out of it and stand where they are supposed to stand. BEWARE! If you do what you are in the habit of doing, you will find yourself in the box! It is like when you have been in the habit of putting your toothbrush in a certain place and then your mom tells you to put it in a new place. If you don't think about it and work at it, where will you put your toothbrush?

HANDLE YOUR PROBLEMS CORRECTLY.

THE OBJECTIVE: To solve one's state and situation by following God's instructions in God's Word and by **having faith** in God and by having Him reign and rule in your heart.

- A. **ACKNOWLEDGE** His Person (He's God!), His Presence (He's here!), His position as Lord and Saviour (He's my Lord and my Saviour!).
- B. **ACCEPT** His provision (He supplies my need), His power (He helps me and strengthens me), His purpose (He has a plan and His plan is good), and His performance (He works in and through me).
- C. **ACT UPON** His Word – its precepts, principles, promises and practices. Put God's Word to work! Thank God for it and act upon it. Just as a woman would carry out a recipe in making a cake or a pie by following the directions, we should do the same with God's Word by heeding what He says.

THE DECISION IS YOURS!

WHERE ARE YOU STANDING? Are you standing in Christ or in the box?

WHAT ARE YOU STANDING UPON? Are you standing upon Christ and His Word or upon your own self experiences, emotions (feelings), energies, etc.?

WHO ARE YOU LOOKING TO? WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING TO?

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT IN YOUR HAND? EXAMINE! EXPLAIN! BE ENCOURAGED! BE EXERCISED!

