

## The Best Place to Stand

*“Be still and know that I am God... And Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord” (Psalm 46:10, Exodus 14:13).*

Not many of us are comfortable standing for very long, especially if it requires standing still. Observe people standing in line at a store waiting to pay for their purchases, looking for the shortest line and sometimes changing when one cashier is working slower than the others. Standing in a corner is punishment for some children.

In order to be productive (or feel productive), most of us think we need to be on the move. We leave little room in our lives for standing.

Interestingly, the English word *stand* is both a verb and a noun. The very fact that it has a verb form indicates that there is decisive action involved.

Among the definitions for the verb form of the word *stand* are:

1. Have or maintain an upright position, supported by one's feet: *Sally stood in the center of the room*
2. Rise to one's feet: *they stood up when the king entered the room*
3. Move to and remain in a specified position: *he stood aside to let them enter*
4. Be situated in a particular place or position: *the courthouse stood in the middle of town*
5. Remain upright and entire rather than fall into ruin or be destroyed: *only one house stood after the tornado came through the town*
6. Remain valid or unaltered: *the decision stands*
7. Remain stationary: *the train stood on track 2*
8. Remain on a specified course: *the ship was standing south*
9. Adopt a particular attitude toward a matter or issue: *the people took a stand on that issue*

To stand is to take a position. It involves a choice. You can choose to move from a lying or sitting position to a standing position. You may also choose to stop moving in order to stand. The choices are not one-time choices, however. They are continual. You decide not only that you will stand, but you must also decide whether you will remain standing or fall back to the position you previously had.

Contrary to what seems to be true, standing can be hard work. Since it somewhat goes against our nature to stand, God has to continually instruct us to do so. He knows our tendency to move ahead of His plan for us.

Obviously, there is a time when we need to move on, but our reluctance to stand still can adversely affect our relationship with God. Until we learn to *stand* before Him, there are several things we may miss. The Bible describes in detail an upright man – who is a person who has learned to stand before God.

### **Stand before God to hear Him speak**

*Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel for the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners...but his delight is in the law of the Lord (Psalm 1:1).*

Moses knew the need to stand before the Lord. Moses instructed men inquiring about whether they could participate in the Passover after they had been come in contact with a human corpse to stand still while he asked the Lord about it (Numbers 9:8). While the people were to return to their tents, God told Moses to stand by Him to hear the commandments that God had for His people (Deuteronomy 5:31).

### **Stand before God to see Him work miracles**

As we stand before the Lord, He works His miracles of nature. Samuel instructed the people to stand and see God work a miracle before their eyes (1 Samuel 12:16). As they stood before the Lord, He brought thunder and rain just as Samuel said He would. Elijah, on the other hand, told Ahab there would be no rain – not even dew – for years, except at his word because of the Lord God of Israel before whom he stood (1 Kings 17:1).

### **Stand before God to worship Him**

*Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart (Psalm 24:3-4a).*

Part of the job of the Levites was to stand every morning and evening to thank the Lord and praise Him (1 Chronicles 23:30). Hezekiah, who opened the doors of the house of the Lord and repaired them, brought in the priests and Levites and instructed them to stand before God and serve Him (2 Chronicles 29:11).

### **Stand before God to let Him fight your battles**

Jehoshaphat, being warned that a great multitude was coming to attack his people, sought the Lord. Through Jahaziel, God's Spirit spoke to Jehoshaphat and the people. The battle was not theirs, but the Lord's. They were not to worry. Their part was to *stand still and see the salvation of the Lord* (2 Chronicles 20:15-17).

When a Christian puts on the spiritual armor of God, the protection it provides allows him to stand and be victorious. *Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one (Ephesians 6:13-16).*

*Stand and Deliver*, a movie produced in 1988, is on the American Film Institute's list of 100 most inspiring movies. It tells the story of a California high school teacher who, determined to lead his students to a new level of accomplishment in math, did what others thought was impossible. He designed an intense math program for his students which required substantial sacrifice on his part as well as theirs. Not only did these troubled teens learn the basics of mathematics, but they mastered advanced algebra, math analysis and trigonometry in preparation for calculus in their senior year. Through all kinds of personal hardship, every student passed the AP calculus exam in their senior year only to have those results challenged by the Educational Training Service. Once again, their teacher came to their aid, getting the ETS to agree to let his students retake the test to overcome the implications of cheating.

Christians have a champion who is always on our side. He alone is in a position to obtain for us what would otherwise be impossible. His sacrifice enables us to stand the test of opposition and our own sinful nature. We can trust that if we stand righteous in the presence of the Lord through His Son Jesus Christ, He will deliver.

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