

Text: 1 Pt 1.22

We are out of the woods this week. All those challenging phrases from v. 19 to 21 of 1 Pt 3 are behind us, we are now back in the land of plain language.

We will find tonight that we have reason for confidence, if persecuted, by reason of our Lord's resurrection. That's been our theme throughout, but tonight's text ties everything together, very triumphantly.

Read 1 Pt 3.18-22, text 22

When someone is in deep distress, pressured by enemies, abused, afflicted, harassed... their situation doesn't feel like victory.

Peter's assurance is that victory is already ours. He means for us to take heart, and press on in the Lord's service despite fears from those who would pressure us to desist.

I. Peter's emphasis**A. A translational curiosity (word order, not manuscript variance)**

NAU 1 Pt 3.22 who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.

KJV 1Pt 3:22 Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

ESV 1Pt 3:22 who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.

NET 1Pt 3:22 who went into heaven and is at the right hand of God with angels and authorities and powers subject to him.

YLT 1Pt 3:22 who is at the right hand of God, having gone on to heaven — messengers, and authorities, and powers, having been subjected to him.

1. Many English translations put "gone into heaven" before "at the right hand of God"
2. This is the *logical* order, but not the Greek order

3. NAU and YLT follow the Greek order (order varies in numerous other versions – these are my “display Bibles” in my computer program)

The point: the Greek order emphasizes “at the right hand of God.”

B. Peter’s thought pattern

1. Launches from the stmt in v. 21, “through the resurrection of Jesus Christ”
2. Starts from (and stands on) the idea that the resurrected Jesus is at the right hand of God
3. Main idea (at right hand of God) supported by two participial phrases
 - a. Having gone to heaven
 - b. Having subjected the powers

C. The Lord’s position is the primary thought in this verse

1. The conclusion to the paragraph, vv. 18-22
2. The position is one of great power

II. The Lord’s position

A. Many references to the Lord at the right hand of God

Lk 22.67-70 ¶ “If You are the Christ, tell us.” But He said to them, “If I tell you, you will not believe;⁶⁸ and if I ask a question, you will not answer.⁶⁹ “But from now on THE SON OF MAN WILL BE SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND of the power OF GOD.”⁷⁰ And they all said, “Are You the Son of God, then?” And He said to them, “Yes, I am.”

Ep 1.18-20 *I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,¹⁹ and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. *These are* in accordance with the working of the strength of His might²⁰ which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly *places*,*

Heb 1.3-4 And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,⁴ having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

1. Exalted position
2. Position of power

B. Of course, there is a path to this position

1. Incarnation
2. Death
3. Burial
4. Resurrection
5. Ascension “having gone to heaven” – from our passage

III. Our confidence

A. The theme of 1 Peter, beginning in 3.8, but especially 3.13ff.

1. Peter exhorts us to confidence
2. Peter exhorts us to view suffering as blessing
 - a. We are to “not fear”
 - b. We are to sanctify the Lord in our heart
 - c. We are to always be ready to make a defense
 - d. We are to keep a good conscience (be blameless)

Where do we get the strength for this?

B. Verse 18: For Christ died, and was made alive

1. By his resurrection he proclaimed victory over the spirits in prison (19-20)
2. By his resurrection, our baptism pictures our salvation (20-21)
3. Because Jesus is at the right hand of God, in the position of power
 - a. We find the identical phrase in Rm 8.34

Rm 8.34 who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

b. Sanday & Headlam comment:

“It is not a dead Christ on whom we depend, but a living. It is not only a living Christ, but a Christ enthroned, a Christ in power.”¹

¹ William Sanday and Arthur Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Epistle to the Romans*, The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1992), 221.

4. Our verse adds the information: “after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him”
 - a. This refers to “ranks” among angels
 - b. Surely it isn’t a reference to the loyal angels who didn’t fall with Satan
 - c. But is a reference to those spirits in prison (v. 19-20), and all other evil spirits over whom he triumphed by the resurrection

“The point is that Jesus reigns over all the hostile angelic powers. Contextually it would make little sense to emphasize that Jesus ruled over good angels. The message for Peter’s readers is clear. In their suffering Jesus still reigns and rules. He has not surrendered believers into the power of the evil forces even if they suffer until death. Jesus by his death and resurrection has triumphed over all demonic forces, and hence by implication believers will reign together with him.”²

Conclusion:

Let’s conclude with a little Spurgeon:

“Christ’s cause is safe. Do not let His Church tremble. Let her not think of putting out the hand of unbelief to steady the ark of the Lord. The history of the Church is to be the history of Christ repeated: she is to be betrayed, she is to be scourged, she is to be falsely accused and spitted on. She may have her crucifixion and her death; but she shall rise again. Her Master rose, and like Him she shall rise and receive glory. You can never kill the church till you can kill Christ. You can never defeat her till you defeat the Lord Jesus, who already wears the crown of triumph. The grand old cause is safe. The outlook may be dark just now, and it may be unpopular to follow the Lamb wherever He goes, but the day shall come when they who do so shall walk in white, for they are worthy. The wheel will turn, and those who are lowest now shall soon be highest. Those who have been with Him in the dust shall be with Him in His glory.”³

² Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, 197–98.

³ Spurgeon, *1 Peter*, 1 Pt 3.22.