A good C. E. O. can do wonders for a failing company. Remember the Chrysler Corporation back in the 70’s? For decades, the Chrysler Corporation was renowned for making good, expensive cars. You were really somebody if you could drive a Chrysler. But the auto maker fell on hard times. It appeared that Chrysler would go into bankruptcy or fade out altogether. Until they introduced Lee Iacocca as their new C. E. O. (Chief Executive Officer). Within a couple of years, Chrysler was back on the board again in the competitive auto making business. For years, what happened at Chrysler was a model of what to do when a large company falls on hard times.

We confess these words every Sunday: “Sitting at the right hand of God.” But what does that mean? It’s a word picture from ancient times. When a king grew old and wanted to step back from ruling his country, he would sometimes bring his son in to rule in his place. He would invest all the authority in his kingdom into the hands of his son so that his decisions were also the king’s decisions. In effect, the king would make his son the “C.E.O” of his kingdom. The symbol of his power and authority was to be seated on a throne next to the king at his right hand.

When Jesus ascended into heaven and sat down at God’s right hand, he became God’s C.E.O. over all of God’s creation. What Paul shows us in our text is that …

Jesus Is The Right Man At God’s Right Hand

We live at a time when balance of power is important. You never want to put ALL power into one person’s hands – for fear of what he might do with it. So the CEO is answerable to the stockholders’ board. The president is kept in check by the Congress and the Supreme Court. We wouldn’t want anyone to have absolute power because we just don’t trust anyone with that much power. I suppose we have a right to be skeptical and untrusting of anyone who has so much power. Unfortunately, I think that we sometimes have a little doubt and skepticism even of God having so much power and authority. Do we really want God to be in charge of our lives? In a popular hymn, we sing: Take my life and let it be Consecrated, Lord, to thee. Take my moments and my days; Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Are we really serious about that? Are we willing to give our future into God’s hands without qualification? Are we willing to let him do what he pleases with us and through us and for us? Or do we secretly really want to have a “veto” on all of God’s decisions? I think that sometimes we just don’t trust God completely to do what is best for our lives!

When Jesus ascended into heaven, God gave him absolute power over everything in heaven and on earth. Listen again to Paul’s words, and how often he expresses the absolute power Jesus has at God’s right hand. “That power is like the working of his mighty strength, {20} which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, {21} far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. {22} And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, {23} which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.” How could God trust Jesus with all that power? The answer is simple. Because Jesus was and is God’s Son. Jesus said, “The Father and I are one.” They are one in the mystery of the Triune God. God’s purposes are Jesus’ purposes and God’s plans are Jesus’ plans.

Do you know how powerful that makes Jesus? He is the boss over everything and
everyone and in every age. Nothing happens in this world unless Jesus either commands it or permits it. When Jesus was beforePontius Pilate, Pilate said he had the power to put Jesus to death. Jesus told him that he didn’t have any power except that which he had received from God above. Now all that power is in Jesus’ hands. He has the power to set up and tear down the kingdoms of the world. He has the power to hold evil in check, and the power to turn the evil plans of Satan into something good for God’s kingdom. He has the power over ever sickness and disease, and the power over life and death.

We tend to accept that in global terms, but do we accept it in personal terms, too? One day, a messenger came to tell Jesus that his good friend, Lazarus, was sick. “When he heard this, Jesus said, ’This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God’s glory so that God’s Son may be glorified through it. Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.” We know that Lazarus did die, but that Jesus raised him from the dead. But for those four days before he came, how sad it was for Mary and Martha! Could Jesus have prevented his death? Of course. He did not even have to go to him to heal him. He could have healed him from afar. But Jesus would use Lazarus’ sickness and death so that he would be glorified through it. Take my life and let it be Consecrated, Lord, to thee. Take my moments and my days; Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Are we glad that Jesus has absolute control over everything that happens in our lives? And I do mean everything! When Jesus sent out his disciples, he told them not to worry. This is what he said. (Mat 10:29-31 NIV) “Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. {30} And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. {31} So don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.” Now all this power is in Jesus’ hands. Normally when you think of the C.E.O, you only think of him making the big decisions and letting his office help take care of the details. Not so with Jesus at the right hand of God. Jesus knows when a sparrow dies and when one of your hairs fall out. He is in charge of absolutely everything!

Do you trust Jesus to be at God’s right hand and to micro manage every detail of your life? Or would you rather that you had some say in the matter, some measure of self-determination? Friends, if we had the power to control our own destiny and to manage all the circumstances of our lives, I’m afraid we would let our selfish and unkind nature make a real mess of things. We would give ourselves prosperity and riches, even though happiness comes with godliness and contentment. We would choose never to fail at anything, even though God’s grace becomes more real for us when we are weak. We would choose never to be sick or injured, even though such things teach us to trust in our Savior and not ourselves. We would deal ourselves a hand that contained no sorrows, even though it is in the time of sorrow that we best understand the hope of heaven. You can be glad that God did not put you at his right hand to make your own decisions for life!

God put the right man at his right hand when Jesus ascended into heaven and God put all things under his feet. Why? Because you can be confident that Jesus wants to protect his investment. When a large corporation hires a new C.E.O., they will often give him a large folder of stocks in the company as a hiring bonus. There’s a reason for that. The company knows that if the C.E.O has a lot invested in the company, then he will do his best to make sure the company succeeds and does not fail. Jesus has a big investment in each and every one of you. He died for you. He gave his life for you. Can you think of
anyone you could trust more to make the decisions for your life than the one who died to save you for heaven? That’s one reason that Jesus is the right man at God’s right hand!

Another reason Jesus is the right man to sit at God’s right hand is that he knows and understands what it is like to be human. In Hebrews 4:15-16, we read: “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. {16} Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” Jesus knows what it’s like to go hungry, and to bury a loved one, and to be rejected by his people. He knows what it’s like to be tempted to the limits of endurance. He even knows what it feels like to face the terrors of death.

Can you think of anyone you would rather have in heaven with authority over the circumstances of your life? Who would you rather have making that decision about when you will die and how you will die? Who better to be the head over all things, so that even Satan cannot tempt you more than you are able? Jesus is the right man at God’s right hand!

Finally, Jesus is the right man because he has an intimate connection with his church. “And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, {23} which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.” There is an intimate connection between the head and the body. If you are at a baseball game and there is a line drive hit in your direction, what happens? You see something coming out of the corner of your eye and in that instant, you blink your eyes to protect them and you throw up your hands. All this information was processed through your head, which made instantaneous decisions to keep you from getting harmed. It’s your head which protects your body.

Paul says that God appointed Jesus to be head over everything “for the church” [key words!]. All those decisions that Jesus makes at God’s right hand have a purpose, just as every decision your head makes for your body has a purpose. That purpose is to promote the well being and health of Jesus’ body, which is the church.

Furthermore, it says that the church is the “fullness” of him who fills everything in every way. Just as the head wouldn’t feel complete with out the body, so Jesus wouldn’t feel complete without the church. You can be sure that every decision Jesus makes from God’s right hand – whether it’s a decision like opening the doors of communist Russia to missionaries, or the decision to let a cancer cell invade your body, that decision was made to protect and further the health of God’s church, of which you are a member.

And that, dear friends, is why you wouldn’t want anyone else but Jesus to be sitting at God’s right hand – the right man in the right place. And that is why we are not afraid to sing, Take my life and let it be Consecrated, Lord, to thee. Take my moments and my days; Let them flow in ceaseless praise. Amen.