

The Denver Colorado area is a fantastic place to live...just don't tell that to anybody else, because Colorado is getting too crowded! In fact, pretty much every Colorado resident says that. The funny thing is, most of the Coloradans who do say that recently came from somewhere else like California and of course they now want to shut the Colorado border down to stop the people growth...just after they arrive, of course!

Colorado has really interesting geography and weather. Many outsiders think the weather must be bad—always cold and wintry. But by virtually everyone's assessment who have been there, Denver is a very sunny place. The earliest promoters of the state claimed that Denver gets about 300 days of sun each year. Meteorologists who are sticklers for accuracy say that depends on what we call "sunny"—is it that the sun was unobstructed all day or just was out at least part of the day?

Really, none of that technical stuff matters—the jury of popular opinion is in—Colorado *is* sunny! And with the elevation of the Mile High City, the sun can really get intense...the better word is *strong*....the sun is strong because of the science of thinner air at higher elevations. And that's really helpful when we get those big Spring snowstorms that can drop 6 or 12 or 18 inches of snow. On the sunny day that follows the snowstorm, the sun goes to work on the snow on sidewalks, driveways, and streets. The Midwest mostly doesn't have this luxury—their snowy season can mean unmelted, ugly accumulation of large dirty piles for months, while snow in Denver often means the white stuff can disappear fairly quickly.

However, every place in the Denver area is not the same when it comes to snow melting. In my neighborhood, which tops out at about 6,200 feet in elevation—a thousand feet higher than Denver—a particular home's snow melt is hugely dependent upon location. Does the home's primary entrance—the driveway and sidewalks—face north or northeast? Well, then, there can be real problems throughout the heart of winter where the sun's rays cannot directly reach the manmade surfaces you want cleared and outside temperatures remain low for a while. Also, how about the all-important tall neighbors' houses or those large trees next door...do they largely shield the sun's rays, or do they allow the sun to do its work?

Veteran home-dwellers in Denver know that a north-facing house can mean a real hassle. Even when the snow is removed from ground surfaces by human effort, any remaining snow on the grass and dwelling can melt and then re-ice on driveways. That's the story every time for a good friend of mine who lives up the street.

On the other hand, a home that faces south or west works much better. My home, for example, faces southwest...that's often the best of all worlds in this Northern Hemisphere city of Denver, because the front of the house catches the sun early in the morning, and that lasts all the way to late in the afternoon.

You see, when it comes to these types of snow and ice issues, *positioning with the sun* is what matters! Just what's the best position in such a circumstance? Well, it's to set yourself up well by living in a place where the sun works to the best benefit, at no cost to you! I personally have great positioning with the sun. Being a Colorado native, my home's positioning with the sun was a big plus when looking for a home.

But the next step goes deeper than that. When a snow comes, I am up early, often at 4 am in the morning, scooping off the driveway and the sidewalks—you should know that's required by city authorities for the safety of walkers and runners. And when I do get up early and spend an hour or two scooping the snow off the hard surfaces, there's always that layer of snow and ice that won't come completely off.

Then, the sun inevitably comes peeking over the eaves of my neighbor's house to the south, and you can see the tangible results methodically unfold—those sidewalks and driveways steam up and dry as the sun reaches them. And that's just amazing to watch. That's right, I have positioned myself to fully take advantage of great positioning with the sun, first by how the house is physically positioned, then by getting out early enough for the sun to finish the work I started. Here's the deal: if I don't scoop a dozen inches

of snow before the sun gets there, well, the sun can help but it won't complete the full job in a few hours—it may take two or three days for the sun to do the work if I don't do the first phase of snow removal.

And remember my neighbor up the street? Even if he scoops well, the sun never reaches his driveway and sidewalks and so they don't really get clear very easily...in fact, they dangerously re-ice from some slightly melting snow whose melted water then re-ices on the sidewalk. For sure, it really is all about positioning with the sun, both before the storm and in handling the particulars of the storm's snowfall.

This is just like our spiritual lives: our results when the storms come are very often a clear consequence of our positioning with the Son...that is, the Son of God! Indeed, just like the Colorado sun, we can count on the Son Himself to function in promised ways—yes, in ways designed to work to our awesome benefit!

First, the Son of God positions us perfectly with the Father, from the moment of our being born-again through the rest of eternity. Jesus died and rose again so that we would be completely reconciled to our Father in heaven. This was planned and promised before He came, and He has positioned Himself perfectly between the Father and us—Jesus is always, *always* in the right position on our behalf. Just like the heavenly arc of the Colorado sun is scientifically predictable every day, so is the Kingdom arc of the Son of God completely reliable, anchored by the Finished Work of Jesus on the Cross.

Second, the Word of God instructs us to recognize that, if we are to get all the benefits of the Son's completely reliable positioning, we must abide with Him...abide in Christ. That is, we must have positioned ourselves and our household so that we maximize the benefits of the Son's positioning...and that's positioning that is anchored in the very beginning, proven in the past, and promised for the future. In short, we must position ourselves and our household to best capture the benefits of the work of the Son.

In John 15:1-8 (ESV), Jesus teaches this: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me, he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples."

You see, we must abide in Christ by placing ourselves and our household in the best position to take advantage of all the Son of God offers. And that verse also brings us to the third point. When the storm is raging, we have already prepared the equipment to scoop through the vestiges of the storm and so we immediately do our part, scooping and scooping and scooping near the very immediacy of the storm such that the Son can join with us to forge the most beneficial, the most elegant joint outcome possible. Because here's the deal: a great snowstorm can bring much-needed moisture for a desert place, or it can wreak great havoc—and sometimes it does both. But our positioning before the storm and our immediate response to the storm will partner with the Son of God to forge the optimal greatness of result and impact.

Yes, it's a 1-2-3. First, Jesus, the Son of God, is perfectly positioned for every circumstance in our lives. Second, our response is to abide in Christ—that means positioning our household to reap the benefits of Jesus. And third, we respond to the events that arrive...the storms...doing our part as early as possible, working in conjunction with what Jesus will do with us in the immediacy of the moment. All of this can and will foster others to marvel, "Look at the Son do His amazing work in His followers' lives." So, whether the storms of Denver or the storms of life, our outcomes are dependent upon the anchoring steadfastness of the Son and our positioning in response to that very steadfastness. Wow, how astounding is that?

A&A: Application & Action

1. What specific, practical steps have you taken to position yourself with the Son of God for the best leverage in the storms to come, in life and at the workplace? Elaborate.

2. When the storms inevitably come, both in life and the workplace, do you have the “equipment” at hand and immediately accessible to take advantage of both Jesus’ formative positioning and the positioning of your household or organization? Whether prepared or not, describe the “equipment” needed.

3. Have you spent the time and effort with other key people identifying, discussing, and glorifying Jesus’s amazing positioning on behalf of your household or workplace organization? What’s your next step to either start or fruitfully repeat that process that concludes in glorifying God?