

RIVERS OF LIVING WATER

How Obtained - How Maintained

STUDIES SETTING FORTH THE BELIEVER'S POSSESSIONS IN CHRIST

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Chapter Five -

CHRIST OUR LIFE

CHRIST desires to be not only our Saviour and our Lord, but to be the very Life of our life. GOD has made ample provision for this through CHRIST's resurrection and ascension.

Creation of the New Man - Co-Resurrection with CHRIST

Death is the gate to life. Co-crucifixion opens the door to co-resurrection. Identification with CHRIST in His death and burial is but the beginning of the believer's union with Him in an endless life.

"For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection" (Romans 6:5).

"Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him" (Romans 6:8).

Identification with CHRIST in His quickening, resurrection and ascension takes the believer into a new sphere and begins the life of the new man.

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with CHRIST, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:4-6).

"And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Ephesians 4:24).

"Together with Christ" on the cross, in the tomb, in the heavenlies! Thus the exalted Lord is able to share with every Christian the victory of His death, the power of His resurrection and the fullness of His glorified life.

The New Sphere - The Believer in CHRIST

The moment a penitent sinner puts faith in CHRIST as Saviour he steps out of life "**in Adam**" and enters into life "**in Christ**." Through the ages upon ages to come he will be "**in Christ**." We will never understand Paul's Epistles if we do not understand the expression "**In Christ**." It is the key to the whole New Testament. It or its equivalent is used one hundred and thirty times. These two words are the most important ever penned to describe the mutual relationship between the Christian and CHRIST.

To be "**in Christ**" determines the Christian's position, privileges and possessions. For to be "**in Christ**" is to be where He is, to be what He is and to share what He has.

To be "**in Christ**" is to be where CHRIST is. But CHRIST is in the heavenlies, so that is where the real home of the Christian is. He is a pilgrim on earth, for his real citizenship is in Heaven.

"For our conversation [citizenship] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Philippians 3:20).

"For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come" (Hebrews 13:14).

Your present address is just a stopping place on a journey, yet some of you are planning for your earthly home as though you were going to live here for ever. Your heart is set on earthly things instead of heavenly.

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth" (Colossians 3:1-2).

Do I hear some of you say, "This is too high a standard for me; it is not only impossible but unattractive. I am on this earth and in this world, therefore why should I not live as though I were and enjoy myself and leave the enjoyment of Heaven until I get there?" Such is the reasoning of vast numbers of Christians, and their lives are in full harmony with their reasoning.

Is it not necessary for us to become acclimatized to our eternal home in Heaven? If the heavenly atmosphere is stifling to me here, what will it be to me there? If the heavenly pleasures and pursuits are unattractive to me now, what will they be to me then? There is music in Heaven, but it is not jazz; there are pleasures there, but not those of the ballroom, the card table or the cinema; there are pursuits there, but not those of making money or a name in society. If my heart cannot stand the higher attitude of life in the heavenlies now, how will it stand it then? It is GOD's intention for you and me to begin to live in Heaven now.

To be "**in Christ**" is to be what CHRIST is. CHRIST, the Head of the body, and the Christian who is a member of that body have one life. The blood of the human body is its life. The blood which is now in my head will soon be in my arm. It is the same blood. So the life that is in CHRIST in the heavenlies is the same life that is in the Christian on earth.

"Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world" (I John 4:17).

We are so enfolded by the Lord JESUS that GOD cannot see CHRIST today without seeing us. This moment as GOD looks at His Son He sees you and me. And what His Son is He sees you and me to be.

To be "**in Christ**" is to share what CHRIST has. All that CHRIST possesses we possess. Every spiritual blessing in Him - joy, peace, victory, power, holiness - is ours here and now. If we are a child of GOD, then we are His heir and a joint-heir with CHRIST, so that all the Father has given to His Son, the Son shares with us.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3).

"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:32).

Do you believe that you are a spiritual multimillionaire? Are you living like one? Perhaps you know some Hong Kong millionaires. Everything about them reveals the fact that they are rich. Do you live like a spiritual millionaire, so that others covet your spiritual wealth? Most of us live like spiritual paupers.

The New Creation - CHRIST in the Believer

When the HOLY SPIRIT begat in the believer a new nature He opened the door to a living, organic union between the Christian and CHRIST. CHRIST and the Christian are then eternally one. So what is it to be a Christian? It is to have the glorified CHRIST in us in actual presence and power.

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal 2:20).

CHRIST Liveth in Me

Can you say it? Paul could. But note the order of his words. First, "**I am crucified with Christ**," then "**Christ liveth in me**." The dethronement of self precedes and makes way for the enthronement of CHRIST.

To be a Christian is to have CHRIST the Life of our life in such a way and to such a degree that we can say with Paul, "**To me to live is Christ**." This means that CHRIST lives now in you in Hong Kong as truly as He ever lived in Capernaum or Cana. Does He do it?

To be a Christian means to have the divine seed which was planted in our innermost spirit at the new birth blossom out into growing conformity to His perfect life. It is to be daily "**transformed into the same image from glory to glory**." Are you being so transformed?

To be a Christian is to have CHRIST the Life of our minds, hearts and wills so that it is He who thinks through our minds, loves through our hearts and wills through our wills. It is to have

CHRIST filling our life in ever-increasing measure until we have no life apart from Him. Does He so fill you?

But I can hear some modern Nicodemus say, "How can these things be? How can I live such a life in my home where I receive no help or sympathy but rather ridicule, and where I have so long lived a defeated life? How can I live a consistent life in my social circle which is pervaded with worldliness and wickedness and where CHRIST is never mentioned or even thought of? How can I live a spiritual life in a place of business where all around me are living wholly in the flesh? How can I even live on the highest plane in my church when it is worldly and modernistic, and I am unfed and untaught?"

Well, you cannot live this life, but CHRIST can. CHRIST IN us can live this life anywhere and everywhere.

He did live it on earth in a home where He was misunderstood and maligned; among people who ridiculed, scoffed, opposed and finally crucified Him. The whole point of this message tonight is to show that we do not have to live this life, but that CHRIST is willing and able to live it in us.

This is the truth that CHRIST taught in germ in His last conversation with His disciples. He had told them that He was going away from them and they were wondering how they would ever live without Him. But He assured them that He would be with them in a spiritual presence far more vital and real than the relationship they had formerly had with Him. The life of the Vine was to become the life of the branches.

"I am the vine, ye are the branches; He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5).

After He taught this to them He prayed it in. It was the burden of His High Priestly prayer.

"I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them" (John 17:26).

Have you ever pondered the last three words of this prayer? **"I in them."** These simple but significant words breathe forth the deepest desire of CHRIST's heart in relationship to His own. It is His consuming desire to live in and of Himself in the Christian.

Paul laid hold upon this glorious truth and it laid hold upon him. It is woven into the warp and woof of his experience, preaching and missionary service.

"Christ liveth in me" and **"to me to live is Christ"** was the acme of his personal experience. There was nothing beyond this for Paul. To him this was life on the highest plane. **"Christ in you"** was the heart of his message to the churches. It rang out with clarion clearness in all Paul's preaching and teaching.

"To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27).

"**Christ in you**" was the passion of all Paul's missionary service. Paul had but one aim and goal in every form of work done - that CHRIST might be formed in every convert.

"**My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you**" (Galatians 4:19).

CHRIST is the Christian's center; CHRIST is the Christian's circumference; CHRIST is all in between. As Paul put it, "**Christ IS all, and IN all.**" CHRIST is the Life of our life.

"**When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory**" (Colossians 3:4).

Is He this to you?

A Perfect Oneness

The spiritual history of every Christian could be written in two phrases, "**Ye in me**" and "**I in you.**" In GOD's reckoning CHRIST and the Christian become one in such a way that CHRIST is both in the heavenlies and upon earth and the Christian is both on earth and in the heavenlies. CHRIST in the heavenlies is the invisible part of the Christian. The Christian on earth is the visible part of CHRIST.

This is a staggering thought. Its plain import is that you and I are to bring CHRIST down from Heaven to earth that men may see who He is and what He can do in a human life. It is to have CHRIST's life lived out in us in such fullness that seeing Him in us men are drawn to Him in faith and love.

But I can hear a doubting Thomas say, "Except I see some one living this CHRIST life I will not believe." Well, I believe because I have seen.

For several weeks I lived in a boarding house kept by a little woman who weighed only eighty-five pounds.

She was kept from falling into a heap by a brace worn at her back. She had lived on the third floor for two years with no outlook but the blue sky above and a patch of green grass a few feet square below. But her eyes shone like stars, upon her face was a smile that the affliction and adversity she suffered could not remove, and mirrored in her countenance was a radiance that one never sees on land or sea except where the Light of the world dwells in undimmed brightness. CHRIST was the Life of her life.

A Christian business man lay dying of cancer. Friends called to comfort him and they left feeling that they had been taken to the very door of Heaven and had seen the King in His beauty. CHRIST was the Life of his life in sickness as He had been in health.

A young Chinese man who had been converted from a very godless, wicked life, and had been a Christian less than two years, came to call on me one day. After he left a gentleman who saw him for only a brief moment said, "Who was that young man? I never met anyone who so

instantly compelled me to think of CHRIST as did he." CHRIST had become the Life of his life.
Is He the Life of your life? Can you truly say, "**Christ liveth in me**"; "**to me to live is Christ**"?

"There's a Man in the Glory
Whose Life is for me,
He's pure and He's holy,
Triumphant and free.
He's wise and He's loving,
Tender is He;
And His Life in the Glory
My life must be.

"There's a Man in the Glory
Whose Life is for me,
He overcame Satan;
From bondage He's free.
In life He is reigning,
Kingly is He;
And His Life in the Glory
My life must be.

"There's a Man in the Glory
Whose Life is for me,
In Him is no sickness:
No weakness has He
He's strong and in vigor,
Buoyant is He;
And His Life in the Glory
My life may be.

"There's a Man in the Glory
Whose Life is for me.
His peace is abiding;
Patient is He.
He's joyful and radiant,
Expecting to see
His Life in the Glory
Lived out in me."

~ end of chapter 5 ~
