

## **RIVERS OF LIVING WATER**

How Obtained - How Maintained

### **STUDIES SETTING FORTH THE BELIEVER'S POSSESSIONS IN CHRIST**

By Ruth Paxson

Copyright @ 1930

MOODY PRESS

CHICAGO

#### **Chapter Eight -**

#### **THE BELIEVER'S PART IN BECOMING SPIRITUAL: YIELDING**

In the two wondrous gifts of His SON and His Spirit, GOD has given us all we need to enable us to live on the highest plane. When He gave His SON and His Spirit He gave all that He has to give.

GOD has made the provision, but you must make the decision whether you will be Spirit-filled or not. There is a boundary line, the right of every man to will, beyond which even GOD cannot go. GOD has set a feast before you, but He cannot compel you to eat. He has opened the door into the abundant life, but He cannot compel you to enter. He places in the bank of GOD a deposit that makes you a spiritual multi-millionaire, but He cannot write your checks. GOD has done His part, now you must do yours.

The responsibility for fullness or lack of fullness is now in your hands. GOD is hindered by one thing only - the room that you give Him to fill. You have a clearly defined part in becoming spiritual which we will now consider.

The basic principle in a spiritual life lies in its control. the HOLY SPIRIT works to bring the Christian to refuse the further reign of self and to choose the sovereignty of CHRIST over his life by yielding to Him as Lord.

**"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"** (Romans 6:16).

To yield the life unconditionally to CHRIST is the first step in a walk in the Spirit.

*The Yielded Life - Why?*

There is a basic motive in yielding the life to CHRIST which when discovered is both convincing and compelling. In the hope that it may help some of you, may I tell you how GOD led me to this discovery.

I was no older than some of the boys and girls here tonight when I accepted CHRIST as my Saviour. I experienced deep and real joy in the consciousness of forgiveness of sins and in the fellowship of CHRIST. This made me desire the salvation of others in my family and for this I prayed but my prayer was not answered. This troubled me.

Though born again, some of the old sins continued to manifest themselves in the same old way. The outstanding sin in my life was a terrible temper. I would not like to tell you some of the things that I said and did when I lost my temper. Having what often accompanies a quick temper, a sensitive, affectionate heart, I would go apart after an outburst and cry as though my heart would break. Then I would resolve to conquer it by will power, but all to no avail, for my temper was quick and my will was slow. From childhood there is one thing that I have always hated - hypocrisy. I had detected it very easily in other Christians' lives and had criticized them freely for it. But one day GOD let His own light flood my soul and revealed to me the hypocrisy in myself. Truly loving my Lord I hated myself for the caricature of Him I was giving to others.

Utterly disheartened I sought the quiet of my own room one day, and determined to stay there until something happened. I told the Lord that either He must show me what a truly Christian life was, and how to live it, or I would ask the pastor to take my name from the church roll, that I might tell my family and friends that I no longer made any profession of being a Christian. GOD knew that I was honest and He always goes nine-tenths of the way to meet an honest soul.

Through two verses from His own Word He answered my questions and liberated my soul. If these two verses could mean as much to even one person here as they meant to me that day, I would praise GOD throughout all eternity for the privilege of giving them to you tonight.

**"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's"** (I Corinthians 6:19-20).

Through three statements in these verses GOD revealed to me the basic motive in a yielded life.

First, **"Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you?"** No, I did not know that my body had any relationship whatever to my conversion nor did I know that the Holy One dwelled within it, that GOD laid claim to my body, and that the HOLY SPIRIT had already made it His home was to me a startling revelation. What kind of dwelling-place was I asking that Holy One to live in?

Suppose you heard today that the greatest ruler on earth was coming to Hong Kong to spend a few days and that the committee on entertainment had chosen your home as the place in which he would stay. What a housecleaning would take place! What preparation would be made that everything would be fitting and worthy of so honored a guest! But oh! what an unclean, unfit place we ask the King of kings and Lord of lords to live in, not for a day but for a lifetime!

But I said, "Lord, I have given you my soul, why do I also need to give my body?" I saw faintly that day, but with growing clearness every day since, why GOD asks for our bodies. He needs a channel for a revelation of Himself to the world. **"The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us"** and men saw the Father in the SON. CHRIST is now in Heaven. But oh! isn't His presence

needed here on earth? Do not those in your city, home, school, office need to see Him? In what way will He reveal Himself to men now? He has two ways.

One is through His Word. But how many millions do not possess a Bible? How many other millions could not read it if they did? The other way is through us Christians who form His body on earth. Oh! the greatest need in Hong Kong today is not merely preaching and teaching the gospel, but it is to see JESUS CHRIST walking up and down these streets and living in your homes. How will He do it?

Through you. The Lord JESUS showed me that day that He needed my body as a medium of revelation of Himself.

There was a marvelously convincing appeal in this to me, yet I refused to yield. Was my life not my own? Was it not asking too much to turn over its absolute sovereignty to another? Was it safe? Was it reasonable? Was it needful? Oh! the plausible arguments Self advanced to retain the kingship over my life!

But my Lord had anticipated this and was prepared to meet it by that second wonderful statement. **"What? Know ye not that... ye are not your own?"**

If everything else is forgotten this evening, I pray that this question will be embedded deep within your heart. It was like a sharp two-edged sword which penetrated to my innermost being and lodged there. How these words brought to light the hypocrisy of professing that I belonged to CHRIST while Self still retained the reins of government! How they went straight to the very heart of the issue like an axe laid at the root of the tree - the enthronement of CHRIST as Lord over my life or the continued reign of Self!

But if I yielded, what might CHRIST not ask of me or take from me? I would have been glad to turn over to the Lord all the unpleasant, unmanageable parts of my life if He would only leave all the rest to me. To master my will He had to melt my heart.

**"What? Know ye not that... ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price?"** Bought! Not my own because - bought! I had thought that by yielding I would be conferring the ownership of my life upon CHRIST. But that day GOD revealed to me that I already belonged to CHRIST by the right of purchase and that CHRIST's claim to the undivided possession and control of my life was an absolutely legitimate one.

This claim I had to admit but still I would not yield. How patient He was with my incredible stubbornness! Very tenderly He opened my eyes and illuminated them that I might see CHRIST crucified. **"Bought with a price"**! Oh! THAT PRICE! **"Redeemed - with the precious blood of Christ!"** This the price paid for me! The life of the spotless, stainless Son of GOD laid down for my sinful, selfish life! That day I saw a Saviour dying for a sinner! A Life given for a life!

Up to that time I had been saying, "Must I give myself to Him?" But that day I cried, "Lord, may I give myself to Thee?" and I yielded all that I was and all that I had to CHRIST for time and for eternity.

And what was the basic motive in that act of yielding? It was just the joyous response of love to Love following the spiritual apprehension of the reasonableness and rightfulness of CHRIST's claim upon my life. Then may I define yielding. Yielding is the definite, voluntary transference of the undivided possession, control and use of the whole being, spirit, soul and body, from Self to CHRIST, to whom it rightfully belongs by creation and by purchase.

It is not in order to be His, but because we are His, that we yield our lives to Him. Purchase gives title to property, but it is only delivery that gives possession. In Peking there was a girls' school which grew in numbers so that additional buildings were needed. These were purchased from a Chinese family whose property adjoined the school. After much bargaining a sale was effected. The papers were drawn up and the purchase price paid.

But in the fall the school was unable to occupy and use the buildings. Why not? The Chinese family had not moved out. Purchase gives title, but only delivery gives possession.

On the cross through His shed blood CHRIST paid the price for the possession of your life. It is His by right of purchase. But have you delivered unto Him that which is His? Have you moved out so that He may move in? CHRIST has the right to exempt you from His property, for He is Lord. But His way is to constrain by love rather than conquer by force. So He appeals to us thus, **"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice."** What response have you made to this appeal?

*The Yielded Life. What?*

Self will relinquish nothing except under compulsion. So it is necessary to understand the full measurement of a yielded life. Many of us think that GOD wants things from us. GOD is a Person: what He desires most is fellowship with a person, so He wants us. He asks first that we yield ourselves.

**"And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God"** (II Corinthians 8:5).

But GOD specifies the measurement a bit more explicitly lest we stop short with merely "giving our heart to the Lord" or "the saving of our soul." It is the easiest thing in the world to use the phraseology of consecration while missing the reality of it. GOD asks for the body as well as spirit and soul.

**"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service"** (Romans 12:1).

But GOD goes still further, for He leaves no loophole in this matter of yielding. He knows full well how the beauty of a life may be marred and its testimony nullified by the unyieldedness of even one member of the body.

What a source of evil is an unyielded tongue!

What possibilities for covetousness in an unyielded eye!

What paths of wickedness are open before unyielded feet!

What a catch-all for gossip is an unyielded ear!

GOD specifies the measurement of surrender, and it reaches out to include every member of your body.

**"Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Romans 6:13).**

"Yourselves,"

"Your bodies,"

"Your members."

It is all-inclusive. Nothing is omitted or exempt. GOD has sanctified our whole personality. Our consecration should be the counterpart of His sanctification.

**"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thessalonians 5:23).**

Our yielding to CHRIST then includes everything within - intellect, heart, will; and everything without - home, children, business, possessions, pleasures, friendships, time, money and life plus. It includes everything in our past, present and future. Sometimes it is easy to surrender the past, but distrust His keeping power for the present and we are full of fear for the future. It includes our worst and our best. Perhaps we gladly give over the dregs of our life to CHRIST but we wish to keep the cream for ourselves.

But in taking the measure of our yielding let it be clearly understood there can be no reservations. We cannot set apart any part of our lives and earmark it "Reserved." The refusal to yield any part is an act of rebellion against GOD. If CHRIST is to be Lord, He must be Lord of all.

*The Yielded Life. How?*

GOD, in His infinite grace, always takes the initiative in bringing us into a fuller experience of our inheritance in CHRIST. So the Lord JESUS stands outside the door of every unyielded room in your life seeking entrance. If He enters, the door must be opened from the inside.

**"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Revelation 3:20).**

He stands and knocks, **"If any man hear my voice."** Have you heard it tonight? **"And open the door."** Oh! here is the "How" of yielding. It is just opening the door. Have you done it? Let us state clearly what this involves.

Yielding to CHRIST is a definite act. It is not an oft-repeated wish that stops in mere desire, but it is a decisive act of the will. Desire becomes decision and decision crystallizes into action. You

must say, "I do here and now yield myself unreservedly to CHRIST."

Yielding to CHRIST is a voluntary act. He stands outside the door but He does not force the lock. He waits for you to open the door. It is Love that desires to enter, but unless met by love the entrance would bring heartache rather than joy. With a smile and a song He wants you to open the door.

Yielding to CHRIST is a final act.

If your yielding is such as I have described tonight, then such an act need never be repeated. If done honestly it is for time and for eternity.

Through yielding you have acknowledged that you are not your own, you have transferred the ownership of your life to CHRIST, you have crowned Him Lord and you have placed yourself wholly under His sovereign control. To repeat this initial act implies dishonesty and falseness in ever having done it.

Of course, one does not know at the time of yielding all that is involved in that act or all that it will require of him. It is only after you begin to live wholly for GOD that you will understand the terrible hold of Self upon your life. But the HOLY SPIRIT will faithfully reveal this. What must one do as these revelations come? Does he need to yield his life all over again? No, that was done once for all. Simply say, "Lord, this thing was part of that whole which I yielded to thee. It, too, belongs to that initial surrender. I did not see until now that it is so unyielded. Just now I yield this particular thing to thee." Thus the initial act of yielding becomes a continuous attitude. "Surrender is a crisis that develops into a process."

From the human standpoint the first condition for a life lived on the highest plane is the yielding of the life to CHRIST. Have you yielded? Is every door unlocked and open to CHRIST your Lord? I once visited a college town to lead evangelistic meetings. Upon arriving at the home where I was to be entertained my hostess took me by an outside stairway to the guest-room, which was over the kitchen. She then left home for the day.

Soon I heard some one at the front door and I thought it was probably the man who was to bring my trunk. As it was raining very hard, I decided to have the trunk put inside downstairs. There were three doors leading into the house from the back porch. I went to the first and tried to open it but could not - it was locked. I tried the second and the third, but each was locked.

Suddenly seized with a strange sense of aloneness I rushed upstairs to the little backroom guest chamber - the only room in the house open to me. To be a bit more conscious of CHRIST's companionship I dropped to my knees in prayer. Instantly He spoke to me, saying, "Do you not know that is the way thousands of people treat Me? They invite Me into their lives, and then put Me away in a little back guest chamber and there expect Me to stay. But I long to enter into every room of their lives and share all their experiences."

Oh! friends, where have you put CHRIST in your life? Have you any locked doors? Has He put His nail-pierced hand on the pleasure room of your life and longed to enter it but found it locked from the inside? Has He wanted to enter into the room where your business was carried on and share in both its projects and profits? Has He been denied entrance because shady, crooked

practices went on there which His all-seeing eye would detect? Has He longed to enter into the room where life plans were being shaped and to help in the fashioning of them? And He tried the door, but entrance was denied - locked from the inside! And has He who longs to fill and to bless you gone back to His little upstairs back room with a grieved and sorrowful heart?

I went from that college town to another. My hostess there was a dear widow. Her home was very humble. We ate in the kitchen, but oh! such hospitality I have seldom enjoyed. Every good thing which her frugal means would permit her to provide she had for me.

The first day she said to me, "Miss Paxson, my home is very humble, but while you are here it is all yours. Go where you want to and do just what you want to - just make yourself at home." And I, who traveled constantly, oh! how I spread out over that whole house and made it mine the few days I was there!

Oh! friends, is the Lord JESUS living within you? Have you ever said to Him, "Lord JESUS, I have only a very simple life to offer you as a dwelling-place, but while you are here it is all YOURS. Go where you want to, do what you want to - just make yourself at home!"

He waits for just such an invitation. How quickly He will accept it when once honestly offered, and how He will spread out over the whole life - truly making Himself at home. If you have not unlocked all the doors from the inside and given Him a gracious and glad invitation to enter, will you do so tonight?

~ end of chapter 8 ~

\*\*\*