



THE BELIEVER IN CHRIST

I have been reading a Classic Book by Ruth Paxson entitled *"Rivers of Living Water"*. Ruth Paxson was born in Manchester, Iowa in 1876. She attended Moody Bible Institute and also served as the secretary for the YWCA in Iowa. She eventually traveled as secretary for the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions (a YMCA-YWCA subsidiary missionary organization that for 50 years launched over 20,000 long-term, cross-cultural missionaries from America into a myriad of unreached parts of our world). In 1911, Ruth sailed for the mission field in China. Health concerns forced her to leave China soon thereafter, and she then taught Bible in Europe and the United States until her death in 1949. Miss Paxson's words in this little book, are like rivers of living water to a thirsty soul.

The Preface to the book records: *"Multitudes of Christians are living in a dry and thirsty land, not realizing that God has wells of living water that may be theirs for the asking. In the hope that the reading of this booklet may lead all such to be 'full unto all the fullness of God in Christ', and in view of the gathering darkness of the apostasy of modern Christendom, these studies are sent out on their mission for the Master."*

Chapter 5 of the book is entitled *"Christ Our Life"* and begins with these words: *"Christ desires to be not only our Savior 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."* A portion of Chapter 5 follows:

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 130 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 in 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 citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ"* (Phil 3:20). *"For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come."* (Heb 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 forever. 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."* (Col 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."* (1John 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 by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ"* (Eph 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?"* (Rom 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.

I, Tressa, close with these questions: Are you a son or daughter of God through faith in Christ? Is your life now covered in the righteousness of Christ? Have you been crucified with Christ and raised with Him to walk in a new, holy life unto God? It is only in Christ that God cancels our sin debt, reconciles our relationship with Himself, adopts us into His eternal family, and enables us to leave our old sinful lives and live victoriously on earth in our new life in Christ for God's purpose to the praise of His glory. *Being in Christ is the very Life of the believer's life.*



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