

REVISED EDITION



YOUR RIGHTS *in* *Christ*

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This book is the reflection of many illuminating and liberating gospel thoughts that have affected our lives. We are indebted to T.L. & Daisy Osborn and Oral & Evelyn Roberts, whose lives and ministries have affected us in a most tremendous way.

—Chris and Anita Oyakhilome



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INTRODUCTION

Liberty in Christ

Luke 4:18:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.”

In this scripture, the word liberty means “release”; in other words, “to set free” or “to bring out of slavery.” Jesus said that the Spirit of the Lord had anointed Him to set men free, to release those who were bruised.

This gives us an idea of what liberty is. A close look at some other scriptures where the word is used will give more insight into its meaning and import .

Galatians 5:13:

“For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.”

Paul says, “You have been called unto liberty.” The original word from which “liberty” as used in Galatians 5:13 was translated, is different from that used in Luke 4:18. “Liberty” in Galatians 5:13 implies the same as in Galatians 2:4 where Paul said:

“And that because of false brethren un-awares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage.”

The word “liberty” in this verse of scripture actually means the same thing as “right” (as in one’s right). It is synonymous with authority, but in this case it emphasizes a right: a legal right!

When he says we have been called unto liberty (Galatians 5:13), he means we have been called into freedom— the kind of freedom that empowers one with a legal right.

Combining this meaning of liberty with that of Luke 4:18, provides better understanding of the word *“liberty.”*

This means that Christ brought us out of slavery, so He could bring us into freedom: freedom with legal rights. Now, it is one thing to bring someone out of something, and it is another to bring him into something else.

Jesus brought us out so He could bring us in. We have therefore been called unto liberty in Christ. We have been brought out of slavery and brought into freedom.

And in that liberty we have rights. In talking about liberty in Christ, we are also talking about the rights we have in Christ:

- **The right to choose**
- **The right to live**
- **The right to rule**

Points to Note:

1. Jesus is the embodiment of liberty.
2. We have legal rights by virtue of our liberty in Christ.

Exercise

1. Describe the term "liberty?"

2. Who anointed Jesus to set men free?

3. From the context of the Introduction, what does it mean to be called unto liberty?

4. Complete this quote: "Jesus brought us out so _____"

5. Enumerate the discussed rights we have in Christ?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____



CHAPTER ONE

The Right to Choose

One thing about Jesus that a lot of people do not know is that He gives to everyone who comes to Him the right to choose.

Christianity is not a religion. In the religions of the world, you lose your right to choose, and as a matter of fact, you almost lose your personality.

You become a religious and psychological *non-person*.

You lose the right to choose to whoever or whatever is extolled to be “god.” You can not choose what you want anymore. Somehow, this opinion of

religion has been passed from one generation to another, and people have come to think that God is really like that.

They think that you lose yourself when you come to Jesus. They think, *“Well, if I am born again, I will not be able to do what I want to do. I will lose my right to choose.”* How untrue! Yet, it is sad to note that some Christians have helped in perpetuating this erroneous idea because of the way they present Christianity to the world.

When you come to Jesus, He gives you the right to choose. Sometimes, though, people have not been able to choose for fear of missing out on God’s will for them.

Several years ago, a sister said a fellow came to her and said she was to be his wife according to the ordinance of God. This fellow said that God had spoken to him and said he was to marry her, and she felt terrible. She felt terrible because she was to marry him and she didn’t want to. It seemed to her that she couldn’t do anything about it.

She prayed, asking God why He would do such a thing to her: telling her to marry someone she didn’t

want for a husband. She respected the gentleman because he was a good preacher. He also obviously knew how to talk the sister into believing it was God's will.

Then one day, she heard me say something from the Bible: that a lady is free to be married to whomsoever she wills. She was surprised and asked if the Bible really said so. She demanded that I show it to her and when she saw it in the Bible, she exclaimed, "Wow!"

I did not know what her trouble was until my explanation. Then she told me all about it. She had been bound. She thought she could not make a choice because God had handed her a husband.

A lot of people are like that. They say, *"If God says that is who you are going to marry, then that is who you must marry. Or if you don't get that job, no matter how good it is, then it means God doesn't want you to have the good job."*

"God says...God says...God says..." until we become "nobodies."

When Jesus came, He showed us that things were not that way. You do have a right to choose. Life really

begins when you give your life to your Creator and He gives you the power to face reality. This is the good life.

In Mark 10, we find a beautiful story of a blind man named Bartimaeus. He always sat by the roadside begging for alms. Then one day, while he was there begging in his usual manner, Jesus Christ passed by. Blind Bartimaeus heard the noise and called to someone to tell him what was going on. They told him, "*Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.*" The Bible says he began to cry out loud, "*Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me.*" There was a crowd with Jesus and quite a number of them were in front of him, and when they got to where blind Bartimaeus was, they charged him to hold his peace.

According to their religion, if you were sick or blind, then it was seen as God being against you. In other words, the sickness was a reflection of your sin, in which case, you had no right to healing. This meant you couldn't dare ask for healing. So they said to him, "Stop; don't talk anymore. The master is coming; be quiet!" But praise God, the Bible says Bartimaeus yelled

the louder, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me." It is recorded that when Jesus Christ got to him, He stopped and asked for him to be brought to Him. Blind Bartimaeus was brought face to face with Jesus. Then, Jesus asked him a question:

"...what wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" (Mark 10:51).

That means, what do you want me to do for you? Jesus gave him the right to choose. Did you observe that? He was ready to do anything; whatever blind Bartimaeus wanted.

Many people are not yet at that point in their lives where they have made a decision concerning what they want from God, because religion tells them not to ask God for anything. They have been told that God has no time to spend on them and their meagre thoughts or desires. *"God, Who is Almighty, and you, so insignificant,"* they say. So religion has told them that regardless of what their present state is, it's God's will for them. A man who is born deaf in one ear is so

because that is God's will for him. To the poor, they say, "That's how it has been in your family lineage: poverty belongs to you. It's God's way of keeping your family humble."

And so, many people have been defeated psychologically because of the lack of knowledge. They do not really know who God is.

On another occasion, Jesus was walking along a street in Jerusalem with His disciples and they came to a man who had been blind from birth (John 9:1-3). The disciples asked the Master questions regarding what they had been taught by the Scribes and Pharisees. They asked, "Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered and said: "None of them."

To them, it followed from their religious upbringing that if someone was born blind, then either he or his parents must have sinned.

What a foolish question! How could he have sinned before he was born? But then, that was their mentality and the Pharisees must have had an explanation for it. They taught the people that any

situation they found themselves in was somehow ordained by God. But that's not true, for only good and perfect gifts come from God (James 1:17).

Another time, Jesus was at the pool of Bethesda where He saw a lot of sick folks. There were people with all kinds of diseases there— a multitude of them. (John 5:1). The Bible recalls that when Jesus came to a man who had an infirmity for 38 years, He asked if he wanted to be healed. Isn't that great? The Pharisees would never have entertained that kind of desire. No one was supposed to ask for healing. How could they, when they reasoned that since God made them that way, they had to stay that way. Some people still say sickness is a way to glorify God.

A lady once said to a preacher: "God put the sickness on me to make me humble."

The preacher responded, "Great! God needs many humble people," and he prayed: "Father, give her more of it so she can be more humble!"

But she shouted, "No, I don't want more of it!"

The preacher, feigning surprise, asked, "But if this sickness is God's will for you, don't you want to have more of God's will?"

Religion binds people. It promises liberty, while it is itself a slave to human limitations. Religion reveals someone trying to reach out to God, to touch Him, to get something from Him, and get Him to do something. That's the kind of religion many people have.

Unfortunately, such people think that's what Christianity is all about: trying to get God to do something. The Pharisees taught the people that way. But when Jesus came, He brought another message. He said, "God loves you. God wants to touch you." There were so many rabbis in Israel but this was one rabbi that was so different. His message was different. All the other rabbis talked about reaching out to God but this rabbi came and said, "God has already done something for you; God loves you," but their small minds could not handle this.

Jesus asked, "***What do you want me to do for you?***" (Mark 10:51). "***Do you want to be healed?***" (John 5:6). He gave them the right to choose.

When you come to Him, He doesn't destroy your personality. Instead, He puts power in your personality and makes you effective and influential. He loves you

the way you are. When you come to Him, He takes away the sin nature and all that's associated with it, and He puts in you the desire and ability to be a righteous person (the ability to do right) and the freedom to choose. He sets you at liberty to serve God as you should. Glory to God!

YOU CAN KNOW HIS WILL

Some people don't understand what it means to know the will of God. They say, "Well, I hope if it's the will of God I will get the job." They always think that God's will is against them. They don't like to say what they want to do because they feel God may just not like it. But if you ask them what God likes, they will still be unable to say what it is. They have turned God into a mysterious being.

Someone said, "God works in mysterious ways, His wonders to perform." God is not mysterious. To be mysterious means to be a "strange dude" that cannot be understood, and that's not who God is. He showed us His will by giving us His Word. He's told us what He did, what He is doing, and what He is

going to do, so we can understand Him. He is neither strange nor mysterious.

Yes, there was a mystery, but Jesus came to solve the mystery.

Colossians 1:22-27:

“In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight: If ye continue in the faith ‘grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister; Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body’s sake, which is the church: Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; Even the MYSTERY which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: 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:"*

Paul, speaking by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, said the mystery is one which was hidden in ages past but now has been revealed to His saints, and it is "Christ in you, the hope of glory." He has now revealed that which was a mystery! And whatever is revealed ceases to be mysterious.

In the Old Testament, God said, *"My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts"* (Isaiah 55:8-9). That was for the Old Testament people who didn't have the eternal life of Almighty God abiding in their spirits. His ways were high above theirs as the heavens are above the earth, but now that we have become partakers of His divine nature, we have been raised up and made to sit together with Christ in heavenly places (Ephesians 2:6). That is where we live now! Glory to God!

Some people just go into the Old Testament to dig out those things that God told sense knowledge

folks, interpret them out of context and then try to apply them to New Testament folks. This is wrong!

You have to understand that they are different from us. They were operating under a different covenant. Jesus said, *“This is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for many”* (Mark 14:24). The Bible says in Hebrew 8:13 that He has made a new covenant, thereby making the first one old; and that which decays and waxes old is ready to vanish away.

In the New Testament, we have a new relationship with God, in which He has brought us to His level, so that we may know His will and understand His ways. For this reason, it is not proper for a Christian to behave lost and confused because he thinks he does not know God’s will. Why not search His Word? His Word will reveal Him and His will to you.

God gives you the right to choose. You can decide what you want. You may say, *“Supposing I choose something God doesn’t like.”* Never be afraid of that. You’re a child of God and God’s will is revealed in you and to you. You’re the expression of the will of God. When people see you laugh, they can tell that

God laughs. People can't see God with their optical eyes, but they see God when they see you because you're His expression!

When Jesus came, He was the revelation of Almighty God. The people didn't know who God was, so He told them anyone who had seen Him had seen the Father (John 14:9). "Just watch me, listen to me, and you'll be able to tell who God is." That's how we all should be talking because that's who we are— the expression of God. And don't think someone is trying to dress you on borrowed robes; it's just the truth.

In Acts 22:14, we find Saul of Tarsus giving his testimony. He talks of his experience on the road to Damascus: how that he was blinded by a blazing light from heaven and afterwards, Jesus sent a man by the name of Ananias to him. This man Ananias laid hands on him and said, "Brother Saul, receive you your sight!" He received his sight and Ananias went on to give him the message from God:

Acts 22:14-15:

"And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his

will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard.”

Did you see that? It says, “*That he should know His will.*” Now, you may say that was for Paul alone. But that’s just what religious people would say. Yes, Paul was chosen to know God’s will. And it was wonderful. But you must realise that this wasn’t for Paul alone. It is for you too! You also have been chosen to know God’s will.

Take a look at Luke 4:18. Jesus was in the synagogue on a certain day and He was given the scroll to take the first reading, like it is done in some churches today. The synagogue attendant would have said “Jesus Joseph, come forward.” They wouldn’t have called Him Christ because they didn’t know who He was.

When He stepped forward, the scroll was handed over to Him and He was told to take the first reading from the book of the Prophet Isaiah. He turned to the sixty-first chapter, and He didn’t read like anyone else

would have read. He didn't say, "Isaiah said the Spirit of the Lord was upon him (Isaiah), for the Lord hath anointed him."

The other folks would have read it like that, after which they would have blessed the Name of the Lord and of His holy prophet Isaiah and gone back to their seat.

When Jesus started reading, He said, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me," referring to Himself and not Isaiah. And when He was through reading, He said, "Today is this scripture fulfilled in your ears."

Jesus said the Spirit of the Lord was upon Him. Why? The Bible says that heaven and earth shall pass away but the Word of God shall never pass away (Matthew 5:18). In Jesus' day, Isaiah had passed on to glory but the Word of the Lord continued on earth. And it's still the same today. Whoever will, let him step into the Word and say, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me," and the Holy Ghost will surely rest upon you.

Don't you dare think that Jesus acted the way He did because He knew Isaiah had prophesied

concerning Him. If you will stand on God's Word as the disciples did, you will get the kind of results they got. Paul, writing to the churches, said the things that happened to the Old Testament folks were written down for us as ensamples but the truths of the New Testament are written for us to believe and act upon today.

Paul could boldly say, "The God of our fathers has chosen me to know his will." But Paul has passed on to glory. Now, whosoever will, let him step into what Acts 22:14 says and declare that the God of our fathers has chosen him to know His will. That's Christianity. God is no respecter of persons. He desired this for Paul, He desires it for you too. This doesn't infer that you are now called into one of the five fold ministries like Paul was, but it means that you have been chosen to know God's will. If you believe this, then confess it with your mouth. Say this: "I know God's will. I am not confused. I have been chosen to know His will. Hallelujah!"

You might say, "Many are called but few are chosen." Yes, that's true, but understand it's meaning.

When Jesus died on the cross, He died for everybody: moslems, buddhists, pagans, everyone. He died for the whole world and said, *“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest”* (Matthew 11:28). The call was to everybody, but only those who answer the call and come to Jesus (become born again) are the chosen ones.

How do you get chosen? When you receive the gospel of Jesus Christ and eternal life is imparted to your human spirit, you become God’s choice, His chosen one. You can therefore know His will and choose right. So everybody has been called, but when you answer the call, you become chosen.

YOU CAN HEAR HIS VOICE

Ananias also told Paul that God had chosen him to see the Just One and to hear the voice of His mouth. That means to have a revelation of the Just One—Jesus Christ. Therefore, you also can boldly say, *“I have been chosen to have a revelation of that Just One and to hear His voice. The whole world may hear other*

voices but I can hear the voice of God." You have been chosen to hear the voice of God.

Jesus said in John 10:1-5 that He is the good Shepherd, and we are the sheep. He said when the shepherd puts forth his own sheep, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. The sheep would not follow a stranger because they don't know (recognize or adhere to) the voice of strangers. Jesus used this to explain our response to His voice. For this reason, you can say confidently that you know and follow His voice. Jesus also said that if you belong to His Father you will hear His words and you will come to Him.

For instance, you've been reading this book and the reason you can go on reading and believing is because your spirit bears witness that this is your Father's Word. As a Christian, you cannot be deceived for too long because the truth is revealed in your heart. You can only be deceived for as long as you stay outside the real teaching of God's Word and the teaching of the Spirit of God. So be assured that you can know His voice and you can choose right.

YOU CAN CHOOSE RIGHT

Let's revisit that question that many people ask: *"What if I choose something God doesn't like? What if what I want is not what He wants for me?"*

Know this: you're a child of God; never be afraid of that. You will know when your desire is wrong and then you can keep it off because you only experience true joy doing what He wants.

Then again, you may ask, "How do I know what God wants?" Well, that's one of the things you've been learning in this book. You've been chosen to know His will. You've been chosen to hear and know His voice. When you were born again, God imparted His life into your human spirit and brought you to His realm of living (2 Peter 1:4).

You have the Spirit of God Who reveals to you the mind of God, so you can choose right. Don't let anybody cheat you out of God's best by telling you that you cannot choose right for yourself. You know His will and you can choose right.

God has given you a right to choose. Decide what you want. Remember, Jesus asked Bartimaeus, "What

do you want Me to do for you?" (Mark 10:51). Perhaps, right now you really have a need. Well then, have you told God what you want Him to do for you? Or are you afraid to ask? God is your heavenly Father, and He wouldn't give you a serpent for a fish.

Even if you had asked for a serpent, God wouldn't just hand it to you. He would ask, "Son, what do you want a serpent for; that's dangerous for you.

If you're asking wrongly, He also knows how to deal with you. He would say, "Come on son, that's not the right thing." He'll show you the right thing. He is always out for your good. He is not out there watching and waiting for you to miss it. He's not wielding a stick over you and warning: "I have given you My will and you had better stick to it. If you don't follow My will, I'll surely get you!" He doesn't talk like that. God is not a despot. He is a good God. He is a loving Father.

Points to Note:

1. Jesus gives to every one who comes to Him the right to choose.
2. God is not mysterious; He has given you the ability to know His will and understand His ways.
3. Life really begins when you give your life to your creator, and He gives you the power to face reality.
4. You are God's expression, His representative on earth today.

Exercise

1. When you come to Jesus, He gives you the right to choose. True or false? _____
2. How is the right to choose a distinguishing factor between Christianity and the religions of the world? _____

3. You have the Spirit of God Who _____
the _____ of God to you so you
can _____ right.
4. Is it possible to know the will of God and hear His voice? Give reasons for your answer.

5. Why shouldn't you ever be afraid of making the wrong choice? _____



CHAPTER TWO

The Right to Live

Do you know that God has given you the right to live? Or are you one of those who say, *“We are just in this world, subject to circumstances; anything can happen; nobody knows tomorrow?”*

When someone dies and is buried, everyone returns home wondering, *Who is next?* and saying, *“Such is life. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the Name of the Lord forever!”* They say the Lord took him. But did He, really? No! God is not a hawk. You turn on the television set and an obituary announcement comes on: *“With gratitude to God, we regret to announce....”* That’s a bundle of

contradiction! They're so happy and grateful to God, and at the same time, they are so sad and full of regret for what He has done; they regretfully announce what they're grateful He did—taking their beloved one away from them. It makes no sense at all!

I heard of a man who was very angry with God because he thought God was wicked. So he made up his mind never to have anything to do with Him. When, at 40 years of age, a preacher asked him why he wouldn't have anything do with God, he answered and said, *"God took my mother when I was a little boy. I needed someone to take care of me, yet God took my mother away from me. I know it was Him who did it because I heard the priest say the Lord took her."*

When this man heard the gospel, that God is love and He never takes away from you (He only gives and does things for your good), he wept like a baby and repented.

God doesn't take anybody away by death. He gives you the right to live. In 1 Corinthians 15:26, the Bible says, *"The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."* Death is an enemy. It has already been

defeated but it is going to be destroyed at the end. If God calls it an enemy, then it means that it is not God who takes people away by death. He doesn't require the service of death when He wants to take any one away.

There are only three occasions recorded in the Bible where God took anybody away, and none was through death. Whenever anybody died, it was not said that God took him. If that person was in God's camp, he went to meet God but that didn't mean it was God Who took him away. Someone else took him out, but God picked him in.

The first person we find in the Bible taken by God was Enoch.

Genesis 5:21-24:

“And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.”

Enoch went fellowshiping with the Lord, and he was not found anymore, for, as the scriptures declare, God took him. The Bible says he had the testimony that he pleased God. And God told him that he (Enoch) would not die; rather, that He (God) would take him.

Whenever God takes somebody away, He takes him alive. God does not use the weapon of the enemy to do anything for His children. You may express surprise but this is the truth.

God took Enoch away alive, because that's the way He does it. He takes them alive. He doesn't act like a hawk. On your way home, He would not just whisk you away suddenly; He gives you 'inside information' (intuitive knowledge) concerning when you are going. He told Enoch, who walked outside knowing he was going because he had a testimony before his translation, that he pleased God.

Hebrew 11:5:

“By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before

his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.”

And next comes Elijah in (2Kings 2:1-11). Elijah knew intuitively that he was going and he told Elisha. Elisha then said, “Before you go, let a double portion of your spirit rest on me.” And when they got across the Jordan, where Elijah was to be taken away, he said to Elisha, “If you see me while I am taken away, you will get what you asked for.” And while they were still standing there, God sent a chariot of fire and whisked Elijah away, and Elisha saw him go! Elijah went to heaven, and it was not through death!

Both of these accounts have something in common. The two men involved knew they were going to be translated before it happened. Enoch had a testimony that he pleased God and Elijah knew he was going. God didn’t catch them unawares.

The third person taken away like that was Jesus. When He died, He went to hell. It wasn’t God that took Him there. At that time, anyone who died as a sinner went to “hades” while those who died as righteous men were taken to “Abraham’s bosom.”

Jesus was made to be sin for us, though He knew no sin (2 Corinthians 5:21) and so had to be taken to “hades” like sinners were. And it wasn’t the angels of God who took him there, for we understand from Jude 9 that two groups are involved with what happens to the spirits of men when they die.

The devil and his cohorts take their captives to hell while the angels of God come for the spirits of the saints and take them to paradise. This was before the resurrection of Jesus. Now, saints are taken to the presence of God.

When Jesus died with the sins of the whole world He was taken to hell. But He dealt with that old devil there and God raised Him from the dead on the third day. The Bible records that after His resurrection, He spent forty days with His disciples. Then one day, while talking to His disciples, He was ready to go and God took Him away alive! The people around all saw Him as He was taken away: He gradually ascended alive until a cloud received Him out of their sight. He did not vanish, He ascended alive! (Acts 1:9).

You may ask, “What if I am old?” Look into your Bible in Genesis 5 and you’ll notice that most of the

people lived for many years. Some lived up to 500 years; Methuselah lived for 969 years. There were others like Jared who lived for 962 years. But then, they lived in sin, and God, seeing the transgressions of man, said in Genesis 6:3: *"My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years."* God reduced man's lifespan to 120 years. But in Psalm 90 (which was written by Moses), you'll notice something different.

One day, Moses was watching the children of Israel as they walked by. He shook his head and said, *"The days of our years are three score years and ten (70): and if by reason of strength they be four score years (80), yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away"* (Psalm 90:10).

People have picked that up and said this is God talking through Moses; therefore, man's days are 70 to 80 years. So when a man is above 80 years of age, they feel, "Hey, What are you still doing around?" But that wasn't God talking. It was Moses who said it, yet he lived for 120 years (Deuteronomy 34:7). Even as

at the time he said that, he was already past 80 years. So God did not hand that down.

Now, let's look at this from another angle. Let's suppose that God really did say so at that time. Jesus said in John 11:25,26, *"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."* Do you think He was talking about spiritual death? No! He said they shall never die. He was talking to people who were already dead spiritually. He was not talking about spiritual death, but physical death.

You may be thinking, *Stop right there. You've gone too far now.* But I tell you, the generation of the Church of Jesus Christ that will believe this, preach it, and act on it is the generation that will see the rapture of the Church.

I have been preaching this a long time. In 1986 when I first preached this, some people didn't agree and I had to hide the tape. A lot of people were alarmed. They screamed, "WHAT! Is he trying to say people don't have to die? This is heresy!" When I saw I was causing commotion, I took that tape and hid it.

However, two years later, I became bolder about it because I saw every reason in the Bible why I should believe it.

2 Timothy 1:10 says, Jesus has abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Believe me, it would rejuvenate anybody.

Jesus gives you the right to live. The unconverted man may die of cancer just because he has been told by the doctor that he has cancer and has only three months to live. So he starts to set his house in order because he believes he has cancer and has no hope. He thinks he's finished for life. He doesn't have the right to choose, so he just accepts whatever is handed to him. He could lose his life and all because he doesn't have the right to choose.

For the Christian, however, it's a different story altogether. You can decide you're not dying through cancer or asthma. You don't have to accept the verdict of the doctor as being final for your life. You have a right to choose.

I remember an asthmatic woman who was caught unawares. She was on her way to a party and she took

her inhaler with her. Unknown to her, it was the empty cylinder she took. Then she had an attack. She brought out the inhaler but alas, it was empty!

There was no solution! She became unconscious and died on the way to the hospital. But if this happens to someone who is born again, he ought to say, *"I have been born again. I have the right to live; I am not supposed to have asthma and I am not dying. I choose to live, in the Name of Jesus."*

You see, you have the right to choose to live and you ought to know it, stand on it, and then say, *"Death, you have been defeated. You get out of my way in the Name of Jesus Christ. I am living to give glory to God in the land of the living."* And that is what is going to happen. Praise God!

You may feel your situation is the worst that could ever happen to any man. You may even think that it would be better to die than to live. Thank God, He did not only give us the right to live but the right to live with dignity. When you came to Jesus, He gave you the right to live with dignity.

You're no longer a nobody. You have become somebody special. Your words have power; they

matter. Do you know what it was for blind Bartimaeus to call on Jesus Christ? The Bible says that when Jesus got to where he was, He stopped. This is the God of the universe stopping because a man called. That should show you that your call is important to God.

You are so important to God that when you call on Him, He will stop everything else and give you His attention. Have you ever thought about that? That is how good He is and how important you are to Him.

A lot of us have never taken advantage of these things. We just stayed there suffering for months.

Sometimes, you don't even know why things are happening the way they are. You just realise things are changing from what they were and you don't know why. It's worse when you don't even know you have the right to change things. So you stay there complaining: *'Our lives have been changing, its been full of bitterness, we have been praying but...?'*

Wrong confessions are often punctuated with a "but." You, however, have a right to choose. What have you chosen? Have you even made a choice? Don't procrastinate. Choose right now!

Take a piece of paper and a pen in your hand, make a definite choice and write it down. Say, "Father, I have made a choice. This is it." **Now, write your choice!**

Points to Note:

1. God has given you the right to live, and not just to live but to live with dignity.
2. God doesn't take anyone away by death.
3. You are so important to God that when you call on Him, He gives you His full, undivided attention.
- 4 you are someone special and your words have power.

Exercise

1. "God does not require the services of death to take anyone." Explain. _____

2. Death as an enemy has been defeated, what will happen to it at the end? _____

3. Which three characters in the Bible were taken to heaven alive by God?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

4. "The generation of the Church that will believe this, preach it, and act on it is the generation that will see the rapture of the Church." What is the author referring to here? _____



CHAPTER THREE

The Right to Rule

Jesus has given us the right to rule.

Revelation 1:5-6:

“And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

Kings rule. The Word says God has made us kings and priests, not that He is going to make us. He has already made us; He is not trying to. And if He says

He has made us so, then it applies to us now and it remains that way. Jesus has made you a king.

You are a king; it doesn't matter what you look like physically, you're still a king anyhow. If you are asked: "Where is your crown?" Say, "I will show you when I talk." What do I mean? You do not know kings only by their crowns, for there are many impostors. You know kings by what happens when they talk. Let me give you an example.

Let's suppose you go to an office and you meet a small-statured man, dressed in an ordinary suit. Presently, you don't know who he is and, really, you don't care to know because he doesn't look like the boss. So you greet him with less regard than you would the boss. Then in comes another gentleman, this time much bigger in stature and well-dressed and you think he is a very important person there. Although, he is not the Chief Executive, you greet him, "Good morning sir" in a very smart and respectful manner. Then he asks you to sit and wait for the boss to see you.

Now, imagine that while you're sitting there wondering who the CEO is, the small-statured man

suddenly emerges from a door, snaps his fingers at the big gentleman and says, "Hey you, come in here." then you know who really is the boss.

After seeing the alacrity with which the big gentleman responds, it immediately dawns on you who really is boss. The next time you see that small man, you will greet him with all due respect because you now know He is. This tells you that it is not in the size or material possession, but it is in what happens when you talk.

Ecclesiastes 8:4;

"Where the word of a king is, there is power: and who may say unto him, what doest thou?"

You are a king, therefore, power is released when you talk. That means you must be careful to say the right things. That is why Jesus in Mark 11:23 said:

"For verily, I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall

come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.”

He did not say, “Whosoever says about the mountain.” He said, ‘Whosoever says unto the mountain.’ It is time to rule as a king. It is time to reign in life over circumstances, sickness, lack, and poverty, as God purposed for us.

Points to Note:

1. Jesus has given you the right to rule.
2. A king is known, not by his physical appearance but by the power behind his words.
3. Power is released when you speak, so be careful to speak right always.

Exercise

1. God is going to make us kings. True or false? Give a scripture reference to support your answer.

2. What happens when you speak as a king?

3. Why must you be careful to say the right things?

4. God's purpose for us is to reign over _____ ,
_____, _____, and _____



CONCLUSION

Exercise your Right

Romans 5:17:

“Much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.”

We have the right to choose!

We have the right to live!

We have the right to rule!

and God’s Word is in support of it! You have the right to take charge and have dominion.

Talk to your body; tell your body what you want. If one of your legs is shorter than the other, tell it to

grow out. You ask, "Is that possible?" Yes! Tell it to grow and it will. Don't say, "I can only see 5 meters ahead of me." If you want to see 100 meters ahead of you, speak to your eyes and say, "Eyes, from today, start seeing 100 meters ahead, in the Name of Jesus Christ!"

This is the way to exercise your right to choose, your right to live, and your right to rule. Your body is not the real you. You are a spirit; you have a soul and you live in your body (1 Thessalonians 5:23). You are the custodian of your body. You can talk to your finances; you can talk to your world. God spoke to the world (that which He had previously created) when it was in chaos.

The Bible records that the whole earth was a chaotic mass and then God said, "Let there be light" and light came into being (Genesis 1:3). And then He put the world into order.

You have your own world. Your world is your sphere of contact. What is going on in your world? What do you do when you get into someone's home and you find everyone afflicted with sickness, saying,

“We don’t know what’s happening; everybody’s falling sick. Yesterday, it was John, today it’s Peter. The other day it was their father. We don’t know who’ll be next but we’ve been praying and hoping God’s Will will be done.”

They feel that talking like this makes them appear humble. But that’s not humility; it’s ignorance gone on rampage. If you hear anybody talk like that, tell the person to quit talking that way. Don’t sympathise with the person. If you get somewhere and they’re saying things like, “Oh, there’s an epidemic everywhere; it’s attacking everybody!” Say, “No! I’m not one of them. It’s not attacking everybody; at least you can count me out!”

What does the Word of God say? It says, “*A thousand shall fall at thy side and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee*” (Psalm 91:7).

Beloved, you have the right to choose, the right to live and the right to rule. **Exercise your right...now!**

Points to Note:

1. You have the right to choose, to live and to rule.
2. You have your own world, and it's your sphere of contact.
3. You have a right to take charge and have dominion in your world.

Exercise

1. How do you exercise your right to choose, to live and to rule? _____

2. You are a _____; you have a _____ and you live in your _____.
3. How does the author describe people who talk like victims, thinking it makes them appear humble. _____

4. When the world was in chaos, what did God do to put it back in order? _____

5. When should you exercise your rights in Christ?

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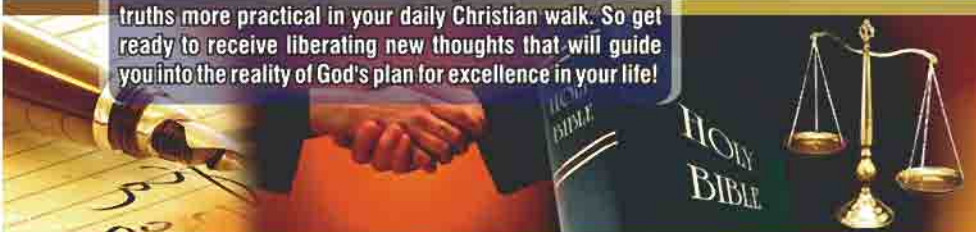


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YOUR RIGHTS *in Christ*



Through an anointed ministry spanning more than 25 years, pastor, teacher, healing minister, television host, and best-selling author Chris Oyakhilome, Ph.D., has helped millions experience a victorious and purposeful life in God's Word. He is the author of several bestsellers including 'None of These Diseases' and 'Rhapsody of Realities,' which he co-authors with his wife, Pastor Anita. His teachings are also available in all audio and video formats.

Presiding over an ever-widening network of Christ Embassy Churches and campus fellowships on five continents, Rev. Chris also pastors one of the largest congregations in Africa. He holds massive teaching and healing crusades with crowds of over 3.5 million in a single night's event. In the year 2003 he pioneered the first 24-hour Christian television network from Africa to the rest of the world. He hosts "Atmosphere For Miracles," a programme on major television networks around the world that brings God's divine presence right into your home.

Pastor Chris is the founder of the world-renowned Healing School, a ministry that manifests the healing works of Jesus Christ and has helped many receive healings and miracles through the operation of the gifts of the Spirit.



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