

Rivers of Living Water

hope of heaven in the future. But the present is a forty-year wilderness experience full of futile wanderings, never enjoying peace and rest, never arriving in the promised land.

Few people are willing to admit that "the old man" sits upon the throne and rules the whole being with despotic power. Even among Christians there is gross ignorance of and indifference to the subtle, insidious workings of the old "I." If the grosser works of the flesh are absent from the life, the individual rests in a complacent sense of goodness, failing altogether to apprehend how obnoxious to God are the more refined and less openly manifest sins of the spirit. How few are willing to say, "I know that in me dwelleth no good thing."

Let us, then, pause for a moment to take a full-length portrait of this hideous self and see if we are not forced to accept God's estimate of him, and to acquiesce in the method of deliverance from his sovereignty. The foundation of life in the natural man is foursquare: self-will, self-love, self-trust, and self-exaltation; and upon this foundation is reared a superstructure that is one huge capital "I." Self-centeredness, self-assertion, self-conceit, self-indulgence, self-pleasing, self-seeking, self-pity, self-sensitiveness, self-defense, self-sufficiency, self-consciousness, self-righteousness, self-glorying—this is the material out of which the building is fashioned.