

# Yosemite Bible Conference 1991-11 Possessing Your Possessions Gen 13:14

by William MacDonald

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*William MacDonald emphasizes the importance of actively claiming and living out the spiritual possessions that God has promised to believers.*

**Duration:** 29:23

**Scripture:** Genesis 13:14, Joshua 1:1-9, Psalm 37:4, Matthew 6:33, Romans 8:1, Ephesians 1:3, Hebrews 10:14

**Topics:** "Possessions"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of possessing our possessions in the journey of faith. He starts by highlighting the vastness of God's promises and blessings available to us in the Bible. He references Genesis 13:14, where God tells Abram that all the land he sees is given to him and his descendants, but they must walk through it and make it their own. The speaker then moves on to Joshua 1:1-9, where God instructs Joshua to be strong and courageous in leading the people into the promised land. He emphasizes the need to meditate on God's word day and night and to observe and obey it in order to prosper and have success. The speaker concludes by reminding the audience that there is still much land to be possessed and challenges them to make these truths their own in practical, everyday living.

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## Transcript

Possessing Your Possessions, and there are three scriptures I'd like to read with you. The first is in Genesis chapter 13, beginning in verse 14. Genesis chapter 13, verse 14.

The Lord said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, Lift your eyes now, and look from the place where you are, northward, southward, eastward, and westward. For all the land which you see, I give to you and your descendants forever. But I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth, so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered.

Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you. Notice that. The land is all yours, Abram, but you have to walk through it.

You have to make it your own. It is yours, but make it your own. Joshua chapter 1, verses 1 through 9. Joshua chapter 1, verse 1. After the death of Moses, the servant of the Lord, it came to pass that the Lord

spoke to Joshua, the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, saying, Moses, my servant, is dead.

Now, therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them, the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon, I have given you, as I said to Moses, from the wilderness and this Lebanon, as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, into the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory. No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life, as I was with Moses, so I will be with you.

I will not leave you nor forsake you. Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses, my servant, commanded you.

Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage. Do not be afraid nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go. Notice verse 2, to the land which I am giving to them, the children of Israel.

The whole land is yours, Joshua, belongs to the children of Israel, but notice verse 3, every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon, I have given you, as I said to Moses. It's all yours, Joshua, but you have to go in and possess it. One final verse, Joshua chapter 13 and verse 1. Joshua chapter 13 and verse 1. Now Joshua was old, advanced in years.

The Lord said to him, you are old, advanced in years, and there remains very much land yet to be possessed. When God saves us, he gives us this wonderful book, and it's all ours the moment we're saved. No parts of the book are banned to us.

It's all ours, but we have to possess it. Now that isn't true with an Orthodox Jew. An Orthodox Jew doesn't become a man until he's 40 years old, and all of what we think of as the Old Testament is not his.

He must not read Ezekiel chapter 1. He must not read the Song of Solomon. An Orthodox Jew must not read those passages of Scripture. He mustn't read the first chapter of Ezekiel because it gives such a marvelous description of the glory of God, and it's too much.

In fact, Jewish tradition has it that one man sought to do it under 40, and fire came out from the page and devoured him. And he must not read the Song of Solomon until he's 40, because it's too explicit. But, you know, when God saves our souls, He gives us the whole book, and He says, Look, it's all yours.

Isn't that wonderful? But there's so much in it that has to be possessed. Maybe I could help by just giving us a little quiz at the very outset. What does it mean to you when you read in Ephesians 2, verse 6, that we're seated with Christ in the heavenly place? And what does that mean anyway? I mean, it's there, and it's part of our inheritance.

It belongs to us. But have I ever possessed it? Or when I read in Philippians 4, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Oh, I know that belongs to me.

What does it mean to me? Is that just a sort of spiritual hyperbole that the Spirit of God indulges in? Have I ever possessed that? Or in the same chapter, I read these words, Be anxious for nothing. We all know it. We know it by heart.

Be anxious for nothing. In everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. What do you do when you come to that verse? Do you say, well, somebody has to worry.

Or when you hear Paul writing to the Corinthians, and he says, all things are yours. You're Christ's. And Christ is God's.

Well, I don't have any trouble with the latter part. You're Christ's. I know I'm Christ's.

And Christ is God's. I know that. What does that mean, all things are yours? Have the sole of my foot ever gone over that territory? Have I ever possessed it as my own? Think of a wealthy industrialist who leaves \$100,000 to his three sons.

One son doesn't even bother to claim it. Another son, well, he has the \$100,000, and he's going to use it someday. Someday, he's going to put it to work.

Right now, he's too busy with the everyday affairs of life. The other son takes it, and he invests it wisely, and enjoys it now, and has future reward from it. God has given us a wonderful... In a sense, when God gives us the Bible, he's saying to us, all that I have is thine.

That's breathtaking, isn't it? All that I have is thine. But he says, you have to possess it. And when I think of this, it's very impossible for me to be smug or complacent.

It's impossible for me to come to the Yosemite Conference and feel I have arrived. In fact, the more I think about it, the smaller I become, till pretty soon I could go through a keyhole. When you think of all the territory in this wonderful book, it's all mine, and yet it has to be possessed.

Where do we begin in this marvelous pilgrimage? Well, of course, we begin in the whole matter of salvation. God offers salvation freely to all men and women, all boys and girls in the world. It's a bona fide offer.

He really means it. I don't believe there's a living person in the world today who couldn't be saved if he repents of his sin and believes on the Lord Jesus Christ. But that person has to come to the Word of God and believe it is the Word of God, and believe that when he reads something in this book, God is speaking.

The God who cannot lie, the God who cannot deceive, the God who cannot be deceived, God of justice, God of holiness, a God of truth. And that when he says something, it's the surest thing in the universe. Right? The surest thing in the universe.

You must come with that trust. And then you must come taking sides with God against yourself. You must come acknowledging your sinfulness.

This is a terrible blow to our pride, isn't it? It's so hard for us as human beings to think, well, I haven't been so bad. We look around and we comfort ourselves when we see other people worse than we are. But God has news for people like us.

That is, that what we are inside is a lot worse than anything we've ever done. And this was one of the great revelations to my soul at the time of my conversion that when the Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross of Calvary, He died for what I am as well as for what I had done. And what I am is a lot worse.

Tremendous. And then I have to come and I have to abandon any hope of saving myself. Acknowledging my sinnership before God.

I think of my thought life. Could somebody like that go to heaven? You think of the motives and intents of your heart. You think of how sometimes you even think murder.

Maybe divorce, never, but murder. You just think of the capability, the potential of the human heart and you realize you really need to be saved. You abandon any hope of saving yourself and then you see the Lord Jesus lifted up there on a cross outside Jerusalem dying for you.

And by an act of faith, you receive Him as your only hope for heaven. That's where the pilgrimage begins. And after it begins, one of the most wonderful possessions to be possessed is forgiveness of sins.

It's really wonderful. When I look back to my conversion, what a relief. The burden rolls away.

My sins are gone. As far as the east is removed from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. He has buried them in the depths of the sea.

We hear God saying to us, Thy sins and iniquities I will remember no more. Can you think of anything more wonderful than that? To think of the past blotted out by the blood of Christ, cleansed in that precious blood. There's nothing like it.

But you not only claim that forgiveness as a sinner, you claim it as a saint as well. Because even after you're saved, you still sin. You commit acts of sin.

You don't live under the domination of sin, but you commit acts of sin. True. And what do you do? You come and you confess that sin.

And you take 1 John 1.9 and you possess it. You claim it. Just as Ruth beat out what she had gleaned, so you do that with the Word of God.

And you say, God says in His Word, 1 John 1.9, if we confess our sin, He's faithful and just to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. You say, I take that. You're down on your knees.

You confess your sin and you get up from your knees and say, settled. But sometimes we don't. Sometimes we get up off our knees and we're still haunted by the past.

And sometimes we confess that same sin a thousand times, don't we? Somebody said, and I like it, instead of confessing a sin a thousand times, confess it once and thank the Lord a thousand times that it's forgiven. The Lord Jesus Christ can't forgive the same sin twice. Only once.

Confess it once. If there's somebody here in the meeting today and you're living a defeated life, you're a Christian and you're living a defeated life because of the past. It just looms up in front.

It's unnecessary. There's forgiveness through the Lord Jesus Christ and through the blood that He shed on the cross of Calvary that, dear friend, you have to possess it. And you do that by faith.

You do it by faith, accepting the Word of God. I think of Joseph's brothers. Joseph forgave them.

He forgave them freely. But you know, after the father died, the brothers began to think, eh, he's still got a grudge against us. And he's going to take it.

Now that Dad has died, he's really going to take it out on us. And they went to Joseph. But there was no grudge.

There was no need of coming and confessing their sin against Joseph. He said, God sent me before you to preserve. You meant it for evil, but God meant it for good.

Dear friends, trust Christ. Trust His forgiveness. He doesn't hold a grudge against you.

When He forgives, He forgives. And He forgets as well. It's basic.

We come next to the whole matter of assurance of salvation. This is something. This is a possession to be possessed.

God wants us to enjoy our salvation. Doesn't He? I think you can be saved without having assurance of salvation. Because you're looking in the wrong place for it.

Perhaps you're looking to your feelings for assurance of salvation. And you never will have real assurance of salvation until you look where God has placed it in the Word of God. First and foremost, assurance of salvation comes through the Scripture.

And you read 1 John 5, 13, These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life. Know. So you go there and you say, God has said it.

God is true. What He says is reliable. God says that if I have genuinely believed on the name of His Son, I have eternal life.

I appropriate that. Now mind you, you'll see other evidences of it as time goes on. But first and foremost, you can have assurance of salvation through the Word of God.

You plant your feet firmly on it. As Joshua had to do on the land of Israel, I claim that. I possess that possession.

But we're still in kindergarten, aren't we? You go on from assurance to eternal security. Now that I'm saved, can I ever be lost? God doesn't want you to be wracked with doubts about your security. God knows that as long as you're holding on with both hands, you'll never get anything accomplished for Him.

And so you go to the Word of God and you read in John 10, My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me, and I give unto them eternal life. But they shall never perish. Neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand.

My Father which gave them Me is greater than all, and no one is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand. You say, I'm going to possess My possession. Jesus Christ said it.

Jesus Christ cannot lie. He cannot be wrong. If He said it, it's true.

No sheep of Christ will ever perish. I claim that as My possession. You're justified.

Absolutely justified. In fact, you dishonor Him by not doing it. Don't you? Absolutely dishonoring to the Lord Jesus.

Not to believe Him makes Him a liar. Makes God a liar. And there'll never be blessing through that.

Assurance of salvation. Eternal security. Really, really wonderful when you think of these possessions that the Lord has set before us.

But that isn't all. He has a lot more for us. For instance, our position in Christ.

We're getting in a little deeper now. Well, I turn to Ephesians 1.6 and I read these marvelous words wherein He has made us accepted in the Beloved. What does it mean? It means that God accepts me not because of who or what I am in myself.

He accepts me in the Lord Jesus. I think the hymn puts it very well. Near.

So very near to God I could not never be. For in the person of His Son I'm as near as He. That's breathtaking.

A believer in the Lord Jesus is as near to God as the Lord Jesus is because the believer is in Christ. Have you ever possessed that possession? It's yours. It's right there in the book.

But have you ever made it your own? That's what God wants you to do. And the next verse says, Dear so very dear to God, dearer I could not be. The love wherewith He loves His Son such is His love to me.

It's too much, isn't it? What a wonderful thing it is to sit here in the church bowl in Yosemite today and realize if you are a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, God can't love you more than He loves you right now. The omnipotent God He cannot love you more than He loves you now. The same love that He has for His Son He has for you because you're in His Son.

Have you possessed that? Or do you go around with a hanged dog appearance all day long? I hope the Lord will forgive me for being a happy Christian because I am. I enjoy these things. I'm just a simple believer.

I read it in a book. I take it as my own and I go on triumphantly and happily. Then I turn to Colossians 2.10 and I read this, Complete in Christ.

Complete in Christ. Have you ever possessed that? I mean it's yours if you're a believer in the Lord Jesus. It's all yours, but the question is are you enjoying it? You say, well, what does it mean? Well, it means that in Christ you have all the fitness for heaven that you could possibly need.

That's what it means. There's nothing better than that. God Himself has nothing better than that.

That's why there's no one in this meeting today who's more fit for heaven than anyone else. Do you believe that? There's nobody more fit. There are no degrees of fitness for heaven.

You either have Christ or you don't. And if you have Christ, you're absolutely fit for heaven. If you don't, you're absolutely unfit for heaven.

It all impinges on that one fact. I just love to stand here and exult in that. Complete in Christ.

Complete in Christ. Make it your own today. Say, thank God.

There's nothing more rewarding. Well, that's different. What you're doing with your life, that's different.

But I mean, as far as fitness for heaven is concerned, Christ is our only fitness for heaven. In our little quiz at the beginning, I asked you about that. What does that mean to you when you read, we're seated with Christ in heavenly places? Ephesians 2. Oh, you say, brother, that's kind of vague and mystical and intangible.

Really never has meant very much to me. Well, maybe I could help by just asking another question. Which of these definitions of a Christian is correct? A Christian is a person on earth looking up into heaven, or a Christian is in heaven looking down on the earth.

You see how that would affect my life if I really possessed that verse, I'm seated with Christ in heavenly places. You think I'd ever get involved in the politics of this world? If I'm up here at this altitude and the world is just a speck down there, it would give me a very detached view of the world. I would never become involved, not only in the world's politics, but its vain and false ways.

It would give me a loftiness, an altitude, and I would take a very detached view of a condemned civilization. Because all of this world has the mark of condemnation upon it. The world passes away.

The lust thereof, but he who does the will of God abides forever. Something to claim. It's practical.

And incidentally, the more we claim the word of God, the more fulfilled our lives will be, the more joyful we will be in life, the more honoring our lives will be to the Lord, and the more blessing we will be to others. The more we make these things our own in practical, everyday living, the more people will take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus. I come to this verse, Paul, writing to the Corinthians again, 2 Corinthians 5.21, "...he hath made him to be sin for us, he who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." That we might be made the righteousness of God? That's what it says, isn't it? What does that mean? I say this reverently.

It means that I can look up into the face of God and say, Oh God, I thank you that in Christ I'm clothed with your righteousness. That's what it means. You go and you take the verse, you possess it, and you exult in it, and you joy in it.

You make it your own. Or you go to Hebrews 10, verse 14, and it says that we're perfected forever. Oh brother, watch out.

Sinless perfection. No, no. That's not what it means at all.

Not what it means at all. The Bible nowhere teaches that the believer is sinlessly perfect. But when it says perfected forever, again it speaks of the perfection of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ on our behalf.

And how standing before God, He can't find a single sin with which to condemn us to eternal death. That's marvelous, isn't it? The omniscient God, He can't find a single sin for which to condemn us to hell. I've quoted that verse before.

A verse of a hymn. I think I'd be more spiritual if I quoted more Scripture and less poetry. It says, Reach my blessed Savior first.

Take Him from God's esteem. Prove Jesus bears one spot of sin, then tell me I'm unclean. And I tell you, that's a challenge you can throw out.

When you possess that truth, perfected forever, you can say, Reach my blessed Savior first. Take Him from God's esteem. Prove Jesus bears one spot of sin, then tell me I'm unclean.

I tell you, what a dignity we'd walk with. And what a separation from the world and from sin and all the rest if we make these things our own in practical everyday living. Our time is gone.

There remains very much land to be possessed. I hope to go over other things that we want to, but the conference wouldn't be long enough for all of them, would it? It's the whole book. Going to this book.

Reading the book. Not someday I'm going to do it. Not when the pressures of life get less.

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