

VALUE OF CONSECRATING ONE'S LIFE

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To consecrate something, means to dedicate it for a specific purpose. The purpose for one to consecrate their heart and life to God, is to allow Him to sanctify (to perfect or purify) them through the work of His Holy Spirit. "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect." (Jesus said, Matt. 5:48).

Of course, we could never become perfect of ourselves, so being consecrated to God means to humble ourselves, and be willing to allow God's Spirit (the very nature of Jesus Christ) to take place in our heart, ... to replace the sinful nature that each one inherited from Adam. It is to be sanctified by the shed blood of Christ. That enables us to turn from spiritual darkness to spiritual light.

That is why Jesus appeared again on earth to speak to the apostle Paul, to commission him to give God's Holy Word to the Gentiles, (Acts 26:18), "that they may turn from darkness to light and from the obedience to Satan to God, in order to receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among those who are sanctified through faith in Me." (Jesus said).

Therefore, knowing that we stay connected to Christ through our continuing faith in Him, we can easily realize the true value and importance of the 'consecration' of our life into God's hands, (and it is a desire and willingness to do His will, rather than follow our own will of the self-life).

It is one thing to consecrate ourselves to God, and another thing to stay consecrated to Him. As we consider this subject, we can ask God to enable us to realize of ourselves if our life is consecrated to Him, and realize that because of His never-ending mercy, we can renew the consecration of our life to Him.

We will find it very profitable to review our 'consecration', (our stand on principles of the divine Truths from God's Word), ... and then renew our surrender to do God's 'Will', that He may lead us to be fully 'trusting' in Him. (2 Cor.13:5 says), "Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you, unless, of course, you fail the test?"

After reviewing (and renewing) our 'consecration' (on where we may have compromised our trust), we can have Christ within. We can then receive blessings from God that will follow such an important step in the Christian 'life of faith' (that of staying consecrated).

Consecration means to give ourselves to God for Him to control and use as He sees fit to do so. God will take control and take possession of any person who truly turns their life over to Him. The

real purpose of consecration, however, is to place ourselves in a position to receive from God, the inheritance that Jesus Christ purchased for us with His own blood (the forgiveness, righteousness, peace, health, financial needs, protection, and all other blessings).

The Holy Spirit has been sent into this world, to take possession of us, to teach and train us, and show us everything that we need to know concerning our divine inheritance in Christ, and to lead us into receiving it. Consecrating ourselves to God, enables Him to do this for us (so we can see how important it is). Every blessing that God has for us in our 'life of trust' here on earth, depends upon our taking that step of consecrating our life to Him, and it enables us to be prepared by Him for 'Eternal Life' as well.

Heaven is a prepared place for a 'prepared people' (1 Thess.5:23 tells us), "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved 'blameless' at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

So, we can see that the 'consecration' (or commitment) of our life to God's full control, is the only means by which He can prepare us for Heaven. The sooner we realize that we cannot get there by our own outward efforts of the self-life, the sooner God will be able to prepare us through a life of faith and trust on His Son.

It is the attitude of the heart that means everything in God's sight, for that 'willingness to follow His leading', is what He is looking for in every person's heart. God sees the 'sincerity' in a truly consecrated heart of a person, not the outward gestures that are not always sincere. "Consecration means to give up our way of getting to Heaven via our own holiness or piety, instead, to accept God's plan for our getting there).

At times, we follow 'forms' of consecration (or commitment) in our daily life matters or business dealings. For example, if we wanted to go by train to another city, we would need to (in a sense of the word), consecrate ourselves to the transportation company, give up our way of getting there, and be willing to accept their way, and go according to their plan.

In a truly consecrated Christian life, it is to be willing to go through life according to God's 'plan of trust' on His Son, instead of following our own plans to get to Heaven. "For so greatly did God love the world that He gave His only Son, that every one who trusts in Him may not perish, but may have the Life of Ages." (John 3:16).

Our 'consecration' to God means to allow Him to lead us and prepare us for the 'Life of the Ages', through our 'trust in His Son'. That is God's 'plan of trust' to get us to Heaven, and it is the requirement that He places on the professed Christian.

The first part of that requirement is to believe on what His Son, Jesus Christ did for us, by dying on Calvary's Cross to save us. If we do not first of all believe that Jesus died to save us, we could not have faith in Him, for we would have no reason to have faith if we don't believe Him, and so, would not be willing to put trust in Him.

If we feel that we have no reason to have faith in someone in everyday matters, then we would not feel that we could put our trust on them to do something for us. How could a tailor make a suit for us if we never gave Him the cloth? How could a carpenter build a house if we never allowed him to have the lumber? Yet there are thousands of people (and we are safe in saying millions of professed Christians), who expect God to take them to Heaven, but have never allowed Him to have their life (not even the least part of it). That is the reason "many are called, but few are chosen"; and the reason why it is written; "narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it." (Matt.7:14). That is also why Jesus said, "when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth."

Also, "As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man." And, "It was the same in the days of Lot. People were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. But the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all. It will be just like that on the day the 'Son of Man' is revealed."

If one does not believe 'God's Word' about His Son, and so they reject what Christ has done for them on Calvary's Cross (by His pain and suffering for them, shedding His blood to pardon and cleanse them, and then give His life to save them), they also reject His promise to sanctify them by His Holy Spirit, through their faith. (Jesus sent Paul to tell the Gentiles what He had done for them) (Acts 26:18) "that they may turn from darkness to light and from the obedience to Satan to God, in order to receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among those who are sanctified through faith in Me.'

God's 'divine' order and plan for the 'believer' was to be given to the Gentiles, and that plan does not change. It is to start with repentance, believe and be baptized, and receive The Holy Spirit to enable each believer to live a life of trust. The Holy Spirit's work is to guide a believer who is trusting on the Son of God and sanctify and prepare them to be worthy to receive Eternal Life.

Of ourselves, we cannot be worthy, nor can we prepare ourselves by our own outward efforts, instead of consecrating ourselves to God, so that He can prepare us. Again, "Consecration" means to give up our way of getting to Heaven by our own holiness or piety, and to accept God's plan of getting there (by the righteousness of Christ).

Consecration of our life to God will give Him the opportunity to give us a clean heart and the fulness of the Spirit, when we make a full surrender to go His way without compromise. Then God will begin to do what He has promised, that is, perfect our Christian character, leading us to our divine inheritance in this life, and preparing us for Eternal Life to come.

We have to surrender to do God's will, give Him the opportunity to work with us, and be willing to be guided and prepared by His Spirit to be worthy of receiving Eternal Life.

How could a person prepare and cook a meal before going to the market to purchase the food? It would be an unreasonable demand for a husband to expect the wife to prepare dinner, if he did not first provide the food to be cooked (the Pastor said). In the same way, it would be foolish to expect God to prepare us for Heaven, if we did not give Him the opportunity to work with us... and we cannot afford to be unprepared for Heaven. We would be like the example that Jesus used about the man who was unprepared to attend the wedding banquet. (Matt. 22:12-14), "My friend, 'how is it that you came in here without a wedding robe?' The man stood speechless. Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot and fling him into the darkness outside: there will be the weeping aloud and the gnashing of teeth.' For there are many called, but few chosen."

(Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people.) "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved 'blameless' at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thess.5:23).

And that is what God promises to do for us in this Gospel Age (He told us through the prophet), (Ezek.36:25-26) "Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols (self-trust). "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh, and give you a heart of flesh."

(What God is saying, is, "I will take out of your heart, all your dependence upon everything and every person but Myself. But how can God do that for us if we never give Him possession of ourselves? Jeremiah gives us an example of what it means to commit or consecrate ourselves to God, so that He can prepare us to enter into Heaven and be worthy of attending the marriage feast of the 'Lamb of God'. "Then I went down to the potter's house, and there he was, making something at the wheel. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred (soiled) in the hand of the potter; so, he made it again into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make. Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying: "O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter?" says the Lord. "Look, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel!"

(In the same way), as we consecrate (place ourselves) into God's hands as the clay in the hands of the potter (and stay consecrated), God is the great and efficient Potter, and He will show that He is the Master Workman. He will do for us, what He has promised in His Word. He is the only one who can do that preparation work within our heart. Our own self efforts of piety will only hinder God from preparing us.

We must be earnest and determined that in the Name of Jesus, we are going to resist the devil, steadfast in faith. (By the grace of God, we will not do things and meet circumstances in the devil's ways), and God will be faithful to enable us to meet things in His way. Our human efforts, outward piety, and self-righteousness must be put aside forever (as Job did), then God can do the work in us (as He

did for Job). That is what He has promised to do for anyone who is willing to place their entire trust on His Son. That is being consecrated and staying consecrated to Him.

There are passages of Scripture to instruct us how to consecrate ourselves. (Romans 12:1), "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a 'living sacrifice', holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service."

Placing our body as a living sacrifice into God's hands without reservation, is the essential part of 'consecration', for it allows God to do as He pleases with our life. What God pleases to do most with our life, is to prepare us for Eternal Life instead of following that pathway to eternal torture. (2 Peter 3:9) "He bears patiently with you, His desire being that no one should perish but that all should come to repentance."

We can see God's divine 'order of things' that must take place in the true Christian life, that is, repent, believe, be baptized, and be guided by His Holy Spirit, (for it is He alone who can prepare us for Eternal Life, by doing as He pleases with our life). Our prayer each morning, should be, "thank you Lord for this new day, and I place myself in Your capable hands for You to have me do what pleases You".

We give up our plan and way of doing, seeing, and meeting things, and we accept God's plan in its entirety, by being 'willing' to live according to His Scriptures." Some people may think that is difficult to do, but if we make a full surrender of our life to do God's will as His Spirit leads us, He will furnish the power and desire to obey His Word. A fact we must remember is, that "God does not expect us to do His will in our strength" (for of ourselves we could not resist the devil's temptations). But, in back of every command and admonition of God, there is the entire power of God to enable us to live up to it.

We only have to show God that our surrender is final to do His 'will' and obey His 'commands', and that by His grace and strength we will resist the devil in steadfast faith in the Name of Jesus. God sees the true intentions in the heart of each person, and when He sees sincere 'willingness' to resist the devil, then His entire power will be there to enable us to follow every command and admonition He gave.

Behind God's Word is His divine power and the power of the Blood of Christ, so the moment we truly accept, believe, and obey His Word, His power does what His Word says it will do. We show our love for God and His Son, by having faith to obey His Word. His power and love are then manifested in our behalf.

The Israelites did not believe God's Word through Moses, so they did not have faith to obey His directions (as they proved when they were tested by God in the desert). You could reverse that sentence and say, they did not obey God's Word, so they could not have faith to believe, because the Holy Spirit is not with the disobedient. "If you obey my commands, you will continue in my love," (Jesus said, John 15:10). Surely, if one continues in God's love, they would also have the guidance of His Holy Spirit.

