

Give Me Thine Heart

*“My son, give me
thine heart, and let
thine eyes observe
my ways.”
—Proverbs 23:26*

GIVING GOD OUR HEART

and observing his ways means a full and complete consecration of our life to the doing of his will and service. Consecration began with Jesus when he was thirty years of age, and at that time he presented himself to John the Baptist. Jesus had always been committed to faithfully serving his Heavenly Father, but his immersion into the waters of the Jordan River brought new and added meaning to his life and the Heavenly Father's ultimate purpose for the reconciliation of the sin-sick family of man. Jesus was to be the future Savior of the world, and it was at Jordan that he voluntarily offered himself in sacrifice to carry out that plan. “To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.”—John 18:37

A NEW CREATURE

Having offered himself in sacrifice, Jesus was now considered by God as a New Creature. From

that time forward, he had a new heavenly hope that would be proven, tested, and developed for a future and grand purpose. Under the administration of his future kingdom, he would have the power and authority to bring mankind back from the bondage of sin and death.

To accomplish the sacrificial aspect of laying down his human life, as well as his development as a New Creature, our Lord was begotten by the Holy Spirit of God. The further purpose of the Heavenly Father was the development of a little flock of Jesus' followers who would share in the grand work of Christ's future kingdom. This work of calling New Creatures in Christ Jesus by the Spirit of God began at Pentecost. The invitation to give our heart to God in consecration has only been offered during this present Gospel Age.

Let us appreciate to the fullest extent the blessed privilege that we as members of the fallen race have in accepting our High Calling in Christ Jesus, "My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings. Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart. For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh. Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."—Prov. 4:20-23

Our loving Heavenly Father desires that we use our newly consecrated heart, which has been made acceptable to him, to encourage and motivate us in every aspect of our lives. Our heart will be a great source of help to us when fulfilling the daily vows that we have made. Even when we stumble and fail to serve him in word or action, if our heart is properly conditioned and motivated, God will help us to

overcome our unintentional mistakes and stumblings of thought, word, and deed.

Having thus accepted God's will for us, may we with increased diligence consider wisely the instruction of his Word in connection with our new life which has been purchased by the sacrificial blood of his dear Son, our Lord and Savior. "When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay."—Eccles. 5:4,5

BOUGHT WITH A PRICE

When we give ourselves to the Father in consecration, we accept the invitation he has given to us in our featured scripture, 'My son, give me thine heart.' The heart represents the very seat of our deepest affections and motivations and, when willingly given to God, it embodies giving to him everything that we have. All who have made this commitment have given their life to God that he might accept them for his own. He does not do this by miraculously transforming us, but has accepted us as having given him our all. He has imputed the merit of Jesus' sacrifice on our behalf and justified us in his sight. Thus have we been bought with a price—the precious blood of our Lord Jesus.

Paul spoke of this great price when writing to the brethren at Corinth. He told them, "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. Art thou called being a servant? care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather. For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is

the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant. Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men. Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God."—I Cor. 7:20-24

BURIED IN JESUS' DEATH

Paul addressed the deeper meaning and significance that is associated with our consecrated life in Christ Jesus. He said, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him."—Rom. 6:3-8

STEWARDS OF GOD'S WORD

Having thus made this deep commitment in our lives, we become guardians and stewards over the precious Truth that has been given to us. Our faithfulness must be proven, and we are to perform this obligation in the best way that we can. We are to fulfill our consecration vows by using our talents and abilities in serving the Lord's people, and in spreading the comforting message of the Gospel to others. "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord."—I Cor. 4:1-4

Doing God's will should become the foremost matter in our lives. We should beware of temptations to use our talents along lines that might foster pride or self-conceit, remembering always that we are but a servant of our dear Lord and that he is our Master. Our loving Heavenly Father knows that we must use a certain amount of our time and talents in supplying our temporal needs, but we are encouraged to redeem our time. The extra minutes or hours that we may have from day to day should be used wisely in the study of God's Word, and to engage in meditation and prayer.

When we give our lives to God in full dedication and devotion, and accept the invitation of the heavenly calling, we receive the Holy Spirit of power and influence. This is a special gift that will help us to faithfully carry out our consecration. By using this Holy Spirit and submitting to its guiding influence, we will be able to accomplish all things that are necessary to make our calling and election sure. Without it the influences of the world, our fallen flesh, and the temptations of Satan will prevent our being a faithful steward. If we are continually being filled with the Holy Spirit and are properly acting upon it, we will not fail.

We are to resist the flesh's tendency to waste inordinate amounts of time on worldly pursuits and interests, even those that would be considered by

others to be good and acceptable. “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.”—James 1:2-6

A TRANSFORMING WORK

Our consecrated life is a new life in Christ Jesus, and involves the transforming of the heart and mind of our old nature. “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”—Rom. 12:1,2

This transformation by the Holy Spirit of God working in our lives develops the fruits of the Spirit, which includes love, longsuffering, gentleness, faith, meekness, and temperance. At the same time this work is going on, we are also to rid ourselves of the sinful tendencies of our fallen fleshly nature. In his letter to the church at Corinth, Paul said, “As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.”—Rom. 8:14-17

“Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also. I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love. For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”—II Cor. 8:7-9

SELF DENIAL

When we give our heart to the will of our loving Heavenly Father, we come to understand that our new life in Christ Jesus will lead to sacrifice and self-denial. We should quickly realize that the inherited weaknesses of our flesh may at times be in conflict with the New Creature in Christ Jesus. The Apostle Paul’s consecration to God was truly one of sacrifice and self-denial. He said, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”—Gal. 2:20

All who have been baptized into Jesus’ death must continually fight against all earthly ambitions, aims, hopes, and pleasures, and realize that they have given up these pursuits for a share in the spiritual inheritance. The Apostle Peter also spoke of suffering for Christ, and said, “Servants, be subject

to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.”—I Pet. 2:18-21

To share in the future role of the Christ in blessing all the families of the earth, it is first necessary that we have gone through the same types of experiences, trials, sufferings, and sorrow that are common to all mankind. It is only then that we can be truly touched, as was Jesus, with a heartfelt feeling of the world’s infirmities. We must expect to have experiences which try and test our consecration vows to the Lord. We should rejoice in such experiences, because they are being permitted by the divine will and power of our loving Heavenly Father, and are designed to develop us for a special place in Christ’s future kingdom.

Self-denial and sacrifice is a reasonable service if we truly love the Lord and desire to share with him in the uplifting work of all the families of the earth. What more worthy cause could there be for our self denial and vows of sacrifice than the opportunity it will bring for assisting the human family back to the perfection in which man was first created. It is God’s plan of the ages to carry out this reconciliation, and we should rejoice at the prospect of having a part in this future work, realizing that our sacrifice is but a reasonable service.

When found faithful, we will have the privilege of sharing with our Lord in that wonderful work. In the prophetic words of Isaiah, he speaks of the time when mankind will be restored to life and will learn to walk in the way of holiness. "An highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein."—Isa. 35:8

TREASURES IN HEAVEN

The development of the New Creature will prepare the Lord's people for the work of the future. Jesus taught, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."—Matt. 6:19-21

"Henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation." (II Cor. 5:16-18) "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."—Phil. 2:5

The most meaningful decision that any one of the fallen human family can make is to give their heart to the Lord in complete consecration. If we

are among those who have accepted this invitation, we are walking in the narrow way, and being tested, tried, and proven for our faithfulness. Throughout this narrow way, we are being led by the hand of God and receiving many blessings to assist us to greater faithfulness and ultimate victory.

As we continue in our consecrated walk, God expects us to grow in faith and to trust him. He knows we cannot attain perfection in our service to him, but he does require that we put forth our best efforts. He will count such efforts as acceptable in his sight, with any lack due to our fleshly weaknesses covered with the boundless supply of his grace. Our loving Father desires that we accept his will during every experience of our consecrated life. He understands that we are not perfect, and that we will not be able to bring every thought, word, and deed into full compliance with his perfect standards.

PUTTING OUR TRUST IN HIM

If our heart becomes weary at times, let us be strengthened by the wise counsel of the Apostle Paul, who said, “Consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, so that no man may boast before God. But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God,

and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, so that, just as it is written, 'Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord.'"—I Cor. 1:26-31, *New American Standard Bible*

"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."—Phil. 1:6

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