

Giving Up or Giving In: Part 6

Pastor James Bell

Hebrews 4:14–16 NLT

14 So then, since we have a great High Priest who has entered heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to what we believe. 15 This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testings we do, yet he did not sin. 16 So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.

Hebrews 5:7–9 NLT

7 While Jesus was here on earth, he offered prayers and pleadings, with a loud cry and tears, to the one who could rescue him from death. And God heard his prayers because of his deep reverence for God. 8 Even though Jesus was God's Son, he learned obedience from the things he suffered. 9 In this way, God qualified him as a perfect High Priest, and he became the source of eternal salvation for all those who obey him.

The closing of this series must be dialed into the person of Christ Jesus. The only one who qualified to be the redeemer of sins. The one who gave us the most perfect example of how we are to live a life that is pleasing to God. A life that is set aside for the purpose of bringing God glory and honor. A life that brings heaven to earth.

We oftentimes over look the human aspect of Jesus's life because we see the deity or the reflection of God within every word and action. But when we shift our focus to see the fullness of every word and action we will see that His words and His actions is from the bases of Giving Up or Giving In. He was fully man and fully God. John 1:1 "1 In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God." John 1:14 "14 So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son." Jesus existing from the beginning but then He took on a fleshly look and nature. This look and nature placed Him in the position to suffer as we suffer. A struggle to succumb to the temptations of the flesh or to adopt the heart of God. Within each of us we know the outcome of His struggles but today we need to understand that these struggles placed Him at the same crossroad we are at with every decision. "To Give Up or Give In"! It's going to be one or the other. There is no room

to straddle the fence because it's not optional. What would it have been like if Jesus lived a life that was half-hearted for the purpose and reason He was sent?

Let's look in Matthew 4:1-10

Matthew 4:1-10 NLT

1 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted there by the devil. 2 For forty days and forty nights he fasted and became very hungry. 3 During that time the devil came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become loaves of bread." 4 But Jesus told him, "No! The Scriptures say, 'People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" 5 Then the devil took him to the holy city, Jerusalem, to the highest point of the Temple, 6 and said, "If you are the Son of God, jump off! For the Scriptures say, 'He will order his angels to protect you. And they will hold you up with their hands so you won't even hurt your foot on a stone.'" 7 Jesus responded, "The Scriptures also say, 'You must not test the LORD your God.'" 8 Next the devil took him to the peak of a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. 9 "I will give it all to you," he said, "if you will kneel down and worship me." 10 "Get out of here, Satan," Jesus told him. "For the Scriptures say, 'You must worship the LORD your God and serve only him.'"

What if... what if Jesus had of said no to the leading of the Holy Spirit? Then flesh would have never been brought into subjection to the heart of God. If He would have refused then how could He ever establish authority over Satan? Again, we must be looking at this from the position of Giving Up or Giving In. Jesus was led into the wilderness. What is the Spirit of God leading you to? How will you ever have authority over your flesh if we don't submit to the leading of Holy Spirit?

John 7:14-24 NLT

14 Then, midway through the festival, Jesus went up to the Temple and began to teach. 15 The people were surprised when they heard him. "How does he know so much when he hasn't been trained?" they asked. 16 So Jesus told them, "My message is not my own; it comes from God who sent me. 17 Anyone who wants to do the will of God will know whether my teaching is from God or is merely my own. 18 Those who speak for themselves want glory only for themselves, but a person who seeks to honor the one who sent him speaks truth, not lies.

The temple that Jesus took authority over Satan with the word of God is the very same temple that Jesus spoke this truth to the Jewish people. What if He had been half-hearted in His temptation against the flesh, how much authority would he had been able to proclaim in the hearts of man on that day? His willingness to Give Up his ways and Give In to God's ways took away question and doubt as Jesus spoke these proclamations to every heart in attendance. Giving in to God's ways brings revelation

to verses 16-18. How will we know if what He teaches us is correct? By our willingness to give up self and seek after the will of God!

John 7:19–24 NLT

19 Moses gave you the law, but none of you obeys it! In fact, you are trying to kill me.”
20 The crowd replied, “You’re demon possessed! Who’s trying to kill you?” 21 Jesus replied, “I did one miracle on the Sabbath, and you were amazed. 22 But you work on the Sabbath, too, when you obey Moses’ law of circumcision. (Actually, this tradition of circumcision began with the patriarchs, long before the law of Moses.) 23 For if the correct time for circumcising your son falls on the Sabbath, you go ahead and do it so as not to break the law of Moses. So why should you be angry with me for healing a man on the Sabbath? 24 Look beneath the surface so you can judge correctly.”

Jesus was urging them to look beyond what they saw as normal. They saw Jesus as only a man, while we see Him as only a deity of the God head. He was striving to get them to see the bigger picture while we must not overlook the entire picture. The understanding that what Jesus was doing was beyond a recognition of self, but a reflection of God. His obedience to the heart of God caused His flesh to suffer. But it’s deeper than the suffering...it’s bringing flesh into subjection to what God wants to establish. His will to be done on earth just like it is in heaven.

Look at what Jesus spoke to the Pharisee’s

John 8:21–29 NLT

21 Later Jesus said to them again, “I am going away. You will search for me but will die in your sin. You cannot come where I am going.” 22 The people asked, “Is he planning to commit suicide? What does he mean, ‘You cannot come where I am going’?” 23 Jesus continued, “You are from below; I am from above. You belong to this world; I do not. 24 That is why I said that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I AM who I claim to be, you will die in your sins.” 25 “Who are you?” they demanded. Jesus replied, “The one I have always claimed to be. 26 I have much to say about you and much to condemn, but I won’t. For I say only what I have heard from the one who sent me, and he is completely truthful.” 27 But they still didn’t understand that he was talking about his Father. 28 So Jesus said, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man on the cross, then you will understand that I AM he. I do nothing on my own but say only what the Father taught me. 29 And the one who sent me is with me—he has not deserted me. For I always do what pleases him.”

You will search for me but die in your sins...they missed this big time! Jesus is the word of God and the Pharisee’s placed significant importance to the letter of the law but Jesus confirmed that they will die in their sin even though they will search through

scripture. And because they will not die to flesh they cannot go where He was going. This same shoe fits us if our hearts look like the Pharisee's. To get to heaven and dwell in the presence of God, we must die to self. We must crucify flesh with every decision! We must give up and give in! But because they continued to not see Jesus as God in the flesh, their understanding was bound to surface appearance.

Let's look at a few more sections of scripture. Turn with me to Matthew 26:36-45

Matthew 26:36-45 NLT

36 Then Jesus went with them to the olive grove called Gethsemane, and he said, "Sit here while I go over there to pray." 37 He took Peter and Zebedee's two sons, James and John, and he became anguished and distressed. 38 He told them, "My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me." 39 He went on a little farther and bowed with his face to the ground, praying, "My Father! If it is possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine." 40 Then he returned to the disciples and found them asleep. He said to Peter, "Couldn't you watch with me even one hour? 41 Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation. For the spirit is willing, but the body is weak!" 42 Then Jesus left them a second time and prayed, "My Father! If this cup cannot be taken away unless I drink it, your will be done." 43 When he returned to them again, he found them sleeping, for they couldn't keep their eyes open. 44 So he went to pray a third time, saying the same things again. 45 Then he came to the disciples and said, "Go ahead and sleep. Have your rest. But look—the time has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

Notice the grief that Jesus's flesh suffered because he was committed to do the will of God. No matter how much or close we walk with God, we are always at the position to do it our way or to do it God's way. To give up or to give in...and it was only a choice that Jesus could make. He was presented with the same opportunities that we are faced with. What if Jesus would have been half-hearted with this opportunity? What opportunities are we being half-hearted with?

Let's go a little deeper: Philippians 2:5-9

Philippians 2:5-9 NLT

5 You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. 6 Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. 7 Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, 8 he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross. 9 Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names,

Jesus was given a death that He did not deserve and we think that we are beyond the very same things that He suffered. He was lifted up because His flesh went down. And we are at the cross-roads today with these same opportunities and decisions to be servants of the most high. In due season we will be lifted up so that the Kingdom of God can be established here on earth just as it is in heaven.

But I want to circle back to the story of Jesus in the Garden in closing. And notice that Jesus addressed Peter in verse 40

Matthew 26:40–41 NLT

40 Then he returned to the disciples and found them asleep. He said to Peter, “Couldn’t you watch with me even one hour? 41 Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation. For the spirit is willing, but the body is weak!”

I have read this so many times but what I’m about to show you is startling. Who was Jesus speaking to? Yes, Peter! In the gospel of Luke 22:31-34

Luke 22:31–34 NLT

31 “Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift each of you like wheat. 32 But I have pleaded in prayer for you, Simon, that your faith should not fail. So when you have repented and turned to me again, strengthen your brothers.” 33 Peter said, “Lord, I am ready to go to prison with you, and even to die with you.” 34 But Jesus said, “Peter, let me tell you something. Before the rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will deny three times that you even know me.”

In these two portion of scripture Jesus mention the words “give in to temptation” and “faith should not fail”. Jesus gave fair warning to be watchful and prayerful so that Peter’s faith would not fail. Jesus didn’t rebuke the devil that desires to sift Peter as wheat. The decision was for Peter to decide. Peter had to choose if he was going to fall into temptation. That same decision is left up to each of us if we are going to give up or give in.

Let me pray for you today!