

Christian Students @ SAC
Bible Study - Spring 2022
Week 6

THE NORMAL CHRISTIAN LIFE
Chapter 6

THE PATH OF PROGRESS: PRESENTING OURSELVES TO GOD
(2)

Scripture Reading: Exo. 28:36; 2 Tim. 4:7; Rom. 6:13, 16; 12:2

Exo. 28:36 And you shall make a plate of pure gold and engrave upon it, like the engravings of a signet: HOLINESS TO JEHOVAH.

2 Tim. 4:7 I have fought the good fight; I have finished the course; I have kept the faith.

Rom. 6:13 Neither present your members as weapons of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as alive from the dead, and your members as weapons of righteousness to God.

Rom. 6:16 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves as slaves for obedience, *his* slaves you are whom you obey, whether of sin unto death or of obedience unto righteousness?

Rom. 12:2 And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.

Separated Unto The Lord

What is holiness? Many people think we become holy by the eradication of something evil within. No, we become holy by being separated unto God. In Old Testament times, it was when a man was chosen by God to be altogether His that he was publicly anointed with oil and was then said to be “sanctified.” Thereafter he was regarded as *set apart* to God. In the same manner even animals or material things—a lamb, or the gold of the temple—could be sanctified, not by the eradication of anything evil in them, but by being thus reserved exclusively to the Lord. “Holiness” in the Hebrew sense meant something thus set apart, and all true holiness is holiness “to the Lord” (Exodus 28:36, A.V.). I give myself over wholly to Christ: that is holiness.

Presenting myself to God implies a recognition that I am altogether His. This giving of myself is a definite thing, just as definite as reckoning. There must be a day in my life when I pass out of my own hands into His, and from that day forward I belong to Him and no longer to myself. That does not mean that I consecrate myself to be a preacher or a missionary. Alas, many people are missionaries not because they have truly consecrated themselves to God but because, in the sense of which we are speaking, they have not consecrated themselves to Him. They have “consecrated” (as they would put it) something altogether different, namely, their own uncrucified natural faculties to the doing of His work; but that is not true consecration. Then to what are we to be consecrated? Not to Christian work, but *to the will of God, to be and do whatever He requires.*

David had many mighty men. Some were generals and others were gatekeepers, according as the king assigned them their tasks. We must be willing to be either generals or gatekeepers, allotted to our parts just as God wills and not as we choose. If you are a Christian, then God has marked out a pathway for you—a “course” as Paul calls it in 2 Timothy 4:7. Not only Paul's path but the path of every Christian has been clearly marked out by God, and it is of supreme importance that each one should know and walk in the God-appointed course. “Lord, I give myself to Thee with this desire alone, to know and walk in the path Thou hast ordained.” That is true giving. If at the close of a life we can say with Paul: “I have finished my course,” then we are blessed indeed. There is nothing more tragic than to come to the end of life and know we have been on the wrong course. We have only one life to live down here and we are free to do as we please with it, but if we seek our own pleasure our life will never glorify God. A devoted Christian once said in my hearing, “I want nothing for myself; I want everything for God.” Do you want anything apart from God, or does all your desire center in His will? Can you truly say that the will of God is “good and acceptable and perfect” *to you?* (Romans 12:2)

For it is our wills that are in question here. That strong self-assertive will of mine must go to the Cross, and I must give myself wholly to the Lord. We cannot expect a tailor to make us a coat if we do not give him any cloth, nor a builder to build us a house if we let him have no building material; and in just the same way we cannot expect the Lord to live out His life in us if we do not give Him our lives in which to live. Without reservations, without controversy, we must give ourselves to Him to do as He pleases with us. “Present yourselves unto God” (Romans 6:13).

Servant Or Slave?

If we give ourselves unreservedly to God, many adjustments may have to be made: in family, or business, or church relationships, or in the matter of our personal views. God will not let anything of ourselves remain. His finger will touch, point by point, everything that is not of Him, and will say: “This must go.” Are you willing? It is foolish to resist God, and always wise to submit to Him. We admit that many of us still have controversies with the Lord. He wants

something, while we want something else. Many things we dare not look into, dare not pray about, dare not even think about, lest we lose our peace. We can evade the issue in that way, but to do so will bring us out of the will of God. It is always an easy matter to get out of His will, but it is a blessed thing just to hand ourselves over to Him and let Him have His way with us.

How good it is to have the consciousness that we belong to the Lord and are not our own. There is nothing more precious in the world. It is that which brings the awareness of His continual presence, and the reason is obvious. I must first have the sense of God's possession of me before I can have the sense of His presence with me. When once His ownership is established, then I dare do nothing in my own interests, for I am His exclusive property. "Know ye not, that to whom ye present yourselves as servants unto obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey?" (Romans 6:16). The word here rendered "servant" really signifies a bondservant, a slave. This word is used several times in the second half of Romans 6. What is the difference between a servant and a slave? A servant may serve another, but the ownership does not pass to that other. If he likes his master he can serve him, but if he does not like him he can give in his notice and seek another master. Not so is it with the slave. He is not only the servant of another but he is the possession of another. How did I become the slave of the Lord? On His part He bought me, and on my part I presented myself to Him. By right of redemption I am God's property, but if I would be His slave I must willingly give myself to Him, for He will never compel me to do so.

The trouble about many Christians today is that they have an insufficient idea of what God is asking of them. How glibly they say: "Lord, I am willing for anything." Do you know that God is asking of you your very life? There are cherished ideals, strong wills, precious relationships, much-loved work that will have to go; so do not give yourself to God unless you mean it. God will take you seriously, even if you did not mean it seriously.

When the Galilian boy brought his bread to the Lord, what did the Lord do with it? He broke it. God will always break what is offered to Him. He breaks what He takes, but after breaking it He blesses and uses it to meet the needs of others. After you give yourself to the Lord, He begins to break what was offered to Him. Everything seems to go wrong, and you protest and find fault with the ways of God. But to stay there is to be no more than just a broken vessel—no good for the world because you have gone too far for the world to use you, and no good for God either because you have not gone far enough for Him to use you. You are out of gear with the world, and you have a controversy with God. This is the tragedy of many a Christian.

My giving of myself to the Lord must be an initial fundamental act. Then day by day I must go on giving to Him, not finding fault with His use of me, but accepting with praise even what the flesh finds hard. That way lies true enrichment..

I am the Lord's and now no longer reckon myself to be my own but acknowledge in everything His ownership and authority. That is the attitude God delights in, and to maintain it is true consecration. I do not consecrate myself to be a missionary or a preacher; I consecrate myself to God to do His will where I am, be it in school, office or kitchen or wherever He may, in His wisdom, send me. Whatever He ordains for me is sure to be the very best, for nothing but good can come to those who are wholly His.

May we always be possessed by the consciousness that we are not our own.

Questions

1. What is holiness?
2. What is the difference between a servant and a slave?
3. Take 30 seconds on your own to pray to give yourself to the Lord.