

## Consecration

Consecration is simply the constant recognition of the fact that we are the Lord's and not our own.

He who learns that this *is* a fact, and lives in the constant living presence and recognition of it as the great fact,—he is consecrated, and this is consecration.

Now is this a hard thing to do in itself and as the Lord has fixed it. People make it hard for themselves, by thinking it to be something that it is not, and *trying* to accomplish it in a way that is not the Lord's way, and even then they miss it. And, in truth, going about it in another than the Lord's way they cannot possibly do anything else than miss it.

Is it a fact, then, that we are the Lord's?—Of course it is; for it is written: "Ye are bought with a price." 1 Cor. 6:20. And the price is "the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." 1 Peter 1:19. For he "gave *himself* for *us*." Titus 2:14.

This "price" was paid for every soul that is on earth, and for every one who ever was or ever shall be on earth; for "he died for all." Having died for all; having paid the wondrous price for all; having given himself for all;—having thus bought, and paid the price for *all*, it is certainly a fact that all are his. Therefore it is written: "*Ye are not your own*; for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, *which are God's*." 1 Cor. 6:19, 20.

You here to-day are not your own; you are the Lord's. He was bought you, and paid the highest price the universe can afford. Now will you recognize, *just now*, that this is so? Will you confess to the Lord, *now*, that this is so? or will you still refuse to let him have that which is his own, that is, yourself? Will you still hold on to yourself as though you were your own, and were sufficient to redeem yourself? Will you yield up yourself to him to-day, and let him have that which is his own, that he may redeem you? He died for you, gave himself for you, *bought you*, that he might do this for you. In the parable he inquired, Shall I not "do what

I will with mine own"? What say you to-day? Will you let him do what he will with his own? or will you do what *you* will with *his* own?

He not only gave himself for us, but for all there is of us—yes, even for our sins. For again it is written that he “gave himself for our sins.” Gal. 1:4. And he did it “that he might deliver us from this present evil world;” that he might “purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works;” that he might present us “faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy” (Jude 24)—in one word, “that he might bring us to God.” 1 Peter 3:18.

He so loved us that he wants to save us. But he cannot save us in our sins. He will save us *from* our sins. And as our whole self is sin and sin only, in order to get *us*, in order to buy *us*, he had to buy our sins also. So in giving himself for us, he gave himself for our sins too. And as we are his, because he bought us with that great price, so also our sins are his, for he bought them with the same great price.

Then will you, to-day and now, let him have the sins which he has bought? or will you hold on to these yourself? In this, too, will you let him have what is his own? In this, too, will you let him do what he will with his own? And what will he do with these sins? O, he will forgive them! 1 John 1:9. He will make them as white as snow. Isa. 1:18. He will put them away. Heb. 9:26. He will cast them into the depths of the sea. Micah 7:19. He will remove them from us as far as the east is from the west. Ps. 103:12. He will cast them all behind his back. Isa. 38:17. And when they are all cast behind his back, he and his own throne will stand between us and them, as the pledge that we are free from them; and the rainbow round about the throne will be the sign—the token—of the everlasting covenant that our sins and iniquities will be remembered no more. Heb. 8:12.

Thus in giving himself *for* our *sins*, he gave himself *to us*. In giving himself *for* us, he gave himself *to us*. So when we let him have our sins, we get him instead. When we let him have ourselves, we get himself instead. Will you make the exchange now? Would you rather have him than your sins? Would you? Then let him have them. Make the blessed exchange to-day. Would you rather have his way than your way? Would you rather have his life than your life? Would

you rather have his disposition than your disposition? Would you rather have his character than your character? Would you rather have *him* than yourself? Would you? “to be sure I would,” you say. Then, O! let him have you now; make the blessed surrender, and exchange now and forevermore.

This is consecration. And thus it is a daily, an hourly, a constant recognition, in gratitude and thankfulness, that we are his own. So each day, “consecrate yourself to God in the morning. Make this your very first work. Let your prayer be, ‘Take me, O Lord, as wholly thine. I lay all my plans at thy feet. Use me to-day in thy service. Abide with me, and let all my work be wrought in thee.’ This is a daily matter. Each morning consecrate yourself to God for that day. Surrender all your plans to him, to be carried out or given up as his providence shall indicate.” Say, “I am the purchased possession of Jesus Christ, and every hour I must consecrate myself to his service.” “Thus day by day you may be giving your life into the hands of God, and thus your life will be molded more and more after the life of Christ.” This is consecration. And it is not a burden, but a living, everlasting joy.

Therefore, “reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. . . . Yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you.” “Sin shall not have dominion over you,”—is that promise worth anything to you, brethren? It is worth all that God is worth to the one who reckons himself to be dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God through Jesus Christ; and who yields himself unto God, and his members unto God as instruments for God to use. To this one God has declared, “Sin shall not have dominion over you.” Thank the Lord for this blessed promise of freedom from sin and all the power of sin. And this promise he will make a *fact* in the life and experience of every one who reckons thus and yields to God. You furnish the reckoning, he will furnish the fact. You yield to him, and he will use you. You yield to him your members, and he will use them only as instruments of righteousness. And so, “sin shall not have dominion over you,” for God is stronger than sin.

Now another thing. When you are the Lord's yourself, then whose are those things that are in your possession? Whose are the children? Whose is the money? Whose are the houses, the lands, the cattle? Whose? Can you tell? Are they yours, or his? How can they be yours, when you yourself are not your own? When you yourself are the Lord's, whose are all these things but the Lord's? Of course they are his. They are his just as much as you are. And they are his just as *certainly* as you are. "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts." Haggai 2:8. "Every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. . . . And the wild beasts of the field are mine." Ps. 50:10, 11. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." Ps. 24:1. "All the earth is mine." Ex. 19:5. Is not the earth the purchased possession also of the Lord, to be made new for the saints' inheritance?

So then, all these things are the Lord's, as well as yourselves. Will you yield these to him, as well as yourself? Will you recognize his ownership of these as well as of yourself? In all these will you let him have his own, or will you withhold it? Ah! be careful, lest in withholding any of these, you withhold yourself. In all these will you let him do what he will with his own? Will you let him have your children to use as he will? or will you refuse and use them as you will? Will you count the money as all his own, and let him use it as he will, let him do what he will with his own? or will you withhold it and use it as you will? And so with the houses, the lands, and all. Will you count them all the Lord's, held only subject to his will and his call? Will you recognize constantly that all these things are the Lord's, and not your own, just as you recognize that you are the Lord's and not your own? As certainly as you are the Lord's indeed, so certainly are all these things the Lord's indeed. This is consecration.

Let us be glad that the time is coming, and that it is near, when once more it will be that the multitude of them that believe will be of one heart and one soul; and neither will any say that aught of the things that he possesses are his own. Acts 4:32. Of old, none said that aught that he possessed was *his own*, because he recognized that it was all the Lord's. And he recognized that it was all the Lord's because he recognized and knew that he himself was the Lord's indeed.

Thus was it at the beginning of the work of the gospel; and thus will it be at the close. Thus was it in the early rain; thus will it be in the time of the latter rain. This was consecration then; this is consecration now; for the times of refreshing have come from the presence of the Lord, and soon he will send Jesus.

“AND WHO THEN IS WILLING TO CONSECRATE HIS SERVICE THIS DAY UNTO THE LORD?” 1 Chron. 29:5.

“BELOVED, let us love one another; for love is of God.” 1 John iv. 7. “He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.” Verse 8. “We love, because He first loved us.” Verse 19.

Here we have the source of love. It is God. There is no real love except that which comes from God, and this love is shed abroad in the heart “by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” Rom. v. 5. Whoever receives and welcomes the Holy Spirit, has the power to love His neighbor as himself, and will manifest love without an effort, for it will be his life, even as love is the whole of life, for God is love, and He is the life of all. One first begins to live when love springs up in the heart; for “we know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren.” 1 John iii. 14. “Every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God” (1 John iv. 7), and to know God is eternal life. John xvii. 3.

### **LOVING MEANS GIVING**

WE have now before us the source of love, but in what did it really consist?—How does love manifest itself? What is its essential characteristic, its nature? This is made just as plain in the Bible as is the other. Let us set a few texts before ourselves, and extract the sum of their testimony.

“God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John iii. 16.

“Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” 1 John iv. 10.

“Hereby know we love, because He laid down His life for us.” 1 John iii. 16.

“God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Rom. v. 8.

“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. ii. 20.

“Walk in love, even as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us.” Eph. v. 2.

“Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it.” Eph. v. 25.

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Can any one fail to see the one prominent thing in all these scriptures? In what does love consist?—Manifestly in giving. Everywhere we are told that the love of God is shown in that He gave Himself for us. Love is of God; but the only way we know love is in that He laid down His life for us.

Selfishness is not love. “Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own.” 1 Cor. xiii. 4, 5. It needs no argument, but only the statement of the fact, to cause all to know that the most of that which is called love in this world is to a greater or lesser extent a desire to receive some benefit or pleasure for self. The one who loves, or thinks that he loves another, is fully as much taken up with the thought of pleasure that he is to derive, as he is with the thought of giving pleasure to the other. The love that gives everything, and asks for nothing for itself, except the privilege of loving, is rare. It is found among men only to the extent that the love of God is shed abroad in the heart. Nevertheless that is what real love is. To love in deed and in truth is to give self for and to the object of affection. Therefore when we read that the law of God demands that we should love the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our strength, and with all our mind, it means nothing less than that every faculty and fibre of our being is to be given up to the Lord: He gave Himself to us, without any reserve; and that was simply a manifestation of love; therefore when we love Him, we shall do the same thing. Our soul, body, and spirit will be yielded to Him, for Him to use absolutely as He will. His Spirit will then be given entire possession of our bodies, so that we shall have no mind

but the mind of God. If anybody thinks that this is a great thing, it can only be replied that we are talking about “the great commandment.”

### **GIVING IN ORDER TO BE FILLED—CON- SECRATION.**

IN this connection it comes very natural to talk about consecration. A great deal is said about consecration to God, yet very few seem to know just what consecration means. Many say that they wish to consecrate themselves to God, but seem to think that it is a very difficult operation. Now the fact is, it is nothing else than giving ourselves up to Him. To be wholly consecrated to God is to be wholly given to Him, and that means to love Him according to that which is written in the law. All one has to do to consecrate himself to God, is to let go of himself, and let God take possession.

Here comes in another interesting fact, which is very pertinent to the subject before us. It is that in every case in the Old Testament where we read about the consecration of priests, the Hebrew expression is that their hands were filled. A reference to the marginal reading of the Revised Version will show this in the following texts:—

Ex. xxix. 9: “Thou shalt fill the hand of Aaron and his sons.”

Ex. xxxii. 29: “Moses said, Fill your hands to-day to the Lord.”

Num. iii. 3: “These are the names of the sons of Aaron, the priests which were anointed, whose hand He filled to minister in the priest’s office.”

1 Chron. xxix. 3, 5: “Moreover also, because I have set my affection to the house of my God, seeing that I have treasure of mine own of gold and silver, I give it unto the house of my God.” “Who then is willing to his hand this day unto the Lord.”

2 Chron. xxix. 31: “Hezekiah answered and said, Now ye have filled your hands unto the Lord, come near and bring sacrifices and thank offerings into the house of the Lord.”

From all these texts we see that when one was consecrated to be priest, his hand was filled so that he could bring an offering to the Lord: and the consecration of all the people consisted in their hands being filled, so that they

could bring an acceptable offering. But all God's people are called to be priests, "to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. ii. 6, 9), and the sacrifices with which God is well pleased are "to do good and to communicate." Heb. xiii. 16. Therefore it is plain that when one loves the Lord with all his heart, soul, strength, and mind, that is, when one's whole being is given to God, he is then filled by the Lord, so that he can serve his fellow-men, and thus he can fulfil the second commandment of the law, which is, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."