

~Other Speakers S-Z: Classic Christian Writings:

There is a Christian life which, in comparison with that experienced by the majority of Christians, is as summer to winter, or as the mature fruitfulness of a golden autumn to the struggling promise of a cold and late spring.

The blessedness of this Blessed Life lies in this: that we trust the Lord to do in us and for us what we could not do. We find that He does not go back on His Word, but that according to our faith, so it is done to us. The weary spirit which has vainly sought to realize its ideal by its own strivings and efforts, now gives itself over to the strong and tender hands of the Lord Jesus. He accepts the task, and at once begins to work in it to will and to do of His own good pleasure, delivering it from tyranny of besetting sin and fulfilling in it His own perfect ideal.

This Blessed Life should be the normal life of every Christian: in work and rest, in the building up of the inner life and in the working out of the life plan. It is God's thought not for a few but for all His children.

The youngest and weakest may lay claim to it equally with the strongest and oldest. We should step into it at the moment of conversion without wandering with blistered feet for forty years in the desert, or lying for thirty-eight years with disappointed hopes in the porch of the House of Mercy.

The first chamber in the King's holy palace is the Chamber of the New Birth. By nature we are destitute of life--dead in trespasses and sins. We need therefore, first, not a new creed but a new life. The prophet's staff is well enough where there is life, but it is useless on the face of a dead babe. The first requisite is life. This is what the Holy Spirit gives us at the moment of conversion.

We may remember the day and place of our new birth or we may be as ignorant of them as of the circumstances of our natural birth. But what does it matter that a man cannot recall his birthday so long as he knows that he is alive?

As an outstretched hand has two sides--the upper called the back and the under called the palm--so there are two sides and names for the act of entrance into the Chamber of the New Birth. Angels looking at it from the heaven side call it being born again. Men looking at it from the earth side call it trusting Jesus.

Those who believe in His name are "born": "as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name" (John 1:12,13). If you are born again you will trust. And if you are trusting Jesus, however many your doubts and fears, you are certainly born again, and have entered the palace. If you go no further, you will be saved, but you will miss untold blessedness.

Bought With Jesus' Blood

Jesus Christ has bought us with His blood, but alas, He has not had His money's worth! He paid for all, and He has had but a fragment of our energy, time and earnings. By an act of consecration, let us ask Him to forgive the robbery of the past, and let us profess our desire to be henceforth utterly and only for Him: His slaves, His chattels, owning no master than Himself.

As soon as we say this, He will test our sincerity as He did the young ruler's, by asking something of us. He will lay His finger on something within us which He wants us to alter, obeying some command, or abstaining from some indulgence. If we instantly give up our will and way to Him, we pass the narrow doorway into the Chamber of Surrender which has a southern aspect and is ever warm and radiant with His presence because obedience is the condition of manifested love (John 14:23).

This doorway is very narrow, and entrance is only possible for those who will lay aside weights as well as sins. A weight is anything which without being essentially wrong or hurtful to others, is yet a hindrance to ourselves.

We may always know a weight by three signs. First, we are uneasy about it. Second, we argue for it against our conscience. Third, we go about asking people's advice whether we may not keep it without harm.

All these things must be laid aside in the strength which Jesus waits to give. Ask Him to deal with them for you, that you may be set in joint in every good work to do His will (Heb. 13:21).

Consecration Is the Steppingstone to Blessedness

Frances Ridley Havergal has left us this record: “It was on Advent Sunday, December, 1873, that I first saw clearly the blessedness of true consecration. I saw it as a flash of electric light, and what you see you can never unsee. There must be full surrender before there can be full blessedness. God admits you by the one into the other.

“First I was shown that the Blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth from all sin; and then it was made plain to me that He who had thus cleansed me had power to keep me clean, so I utterly yielded myself to Him and utterly trusted Him to keep me.”

Recognize Christ’s Ownership

The act of consecration is to recognize Christ’s ownership. Accept it and say to Him with the whole heart, Lord, I am Thine by right, and I wish to be Thine by choice. Of old the mighty men of Israel were willing to swim the rivers at their flood to come to David, their uncrowned but God-appointed King. When they met him they cried, “Thine are we, David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse” (1 Chron. 12:18). They were his because God had given them to him, but they could not rest content till they were his also by their glad choice.

Why then should we not say the same to Jesus Christ? “Lord Jesus, I am thine by right. Forgive me that I have lived so long as if I were my own, and now I gladly recognize that Thou hast a rightful claim on all I have and am. I want to live as Thine from now on, and I do solemnly at this hour give myself to Thee. Thine in life and death. Thine absolutely and for ever.”

Do not try to make a covenant with God lest you should break it and be discouraged. But quietly fall into your right attitude as one who belongs to Christ. Take as your motto the noble confession, “Whose I am and whom I serve.” Breathe the grand old simple lines --

“Just as I am -- Thy love unknown
Has broken every barrier down;
Now to be Thine, yea, Thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come.”

Consecration--Not the Act of Feelings but of the Will

Do not try to feel anything. Do not try to make yourself fit or good or earnest enough for Christ. God is working in you to will, whether you feel it or not. He is giving you power at this moment, to will and do His good pleasure. Believe this and act upon it at once and say, “Lord Jesus, I am willing to be Thine”; or if you cannot say as much as that, say, “Lord Jesus, I am willing to be made willing to be Thine for evermore.”

Consecration is only possible when we give up our will about everything. As soon as we come to the point of giving ourselves to God, we are almost certain to become aware of the presence of one thing, if not of more, out of harmony with His will. And while we feel able to surrender ourselves in all other points, here we exercise reserve.

Every room and cupboard in the house with the exception of this, thrown open to the new occupant. Every limb in the body but one submitted to the practiced hand of the Good Physician. But that small reserve spoils the whole. To give ninety-nine parts and to withhold the hundredth undoes the whole transaction. Jesus will have all or none. And He is wise.

Who would live in a fever-stricken house so long as one room was not exposed to disinfectants, air and sun? Who would undertake a case so long as the patient refused to submit one part of his body to examination? Who would become responsible for a bankrupt so long as one ledger was kept back? The reason that so many fail to attain the Blessed Life is that there is some point in which they hold back from God. Concerning this

they prefer to have their own way and will rather than His. In this one thing they will not yield their will and accept God's. This one little thing mars the whole, robs them of peace, and compels them to wander in the desert.

If you cannot give all, ask the Lord Jesus to TAKE all, and especially that which seems so hard to give. Many have been helped by hearing it put thus. Tell them to give and they shake their heads despondently. They are like the little child who told her mother that she had been trying to give Jesus her heart, but it wouldn't go. But ask them if they are willing for Him to come into their hearts and take all; and they will joyfully assent.

Tennyson says: "Our wills are ours to make them Thine." But sometimes it seems impossible to shape them out so as to match every corner and angle of the Will of God. What a relief it is at such a moment to hand the will over to Christ, telling Him that we are willing to be made willing to have His will in all things. And then to ask Him to melt our stubborn waywardness, to fashion our wills upon His anvil, and to bring us into perfect accord with Himself.

When we are willing that the Lord Jesus should take all, we must believe that He does take all. He does not wait for us to free ourselves from evil habits, or to make ourselves good, or to feel glad and happy. His one desire is that we should put our will on His side in everything.

When this is done He instantly enters the surrendered heart, and begins His blessed work of renovation and renewal. From the very moment of consecration, though it be done in much feebleness, and with slender appreciation of its entire meaning, the spirit may begin to say with new emphasis, "I am His, I am His, Glory to God, I am His!" Directly the gift is laid on the altar, the fire falls on it.

Give Yourself Entirely Over to the Mastership of the Lord Jesus

Perhaps you have never given yourself entirely over to the mastership of the Lord Jesus. We are His by many ties and rights. But too few of us recognize His Lordship. We are willing enough to take Him as Saviour, but we hesitate to make Him King. We forget that God has exalted Him to be Prince, as well as Saviour. The Divine order is irreversible. Those who ignore the Lordship of Jesus cannot build up a strong or happy life. Put the sun in its central throne, and all the motions of the planets assume a beautiful order. Put Jesus on the throne of life, and all things fall into harmony and peace. Seek first the kingdom of God, and all things are yours. Consecration is the indispensable condition of blessedness.