

WHAT TO DO WITH YOURSELF

"Neither yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." Romans 6:13.

This is not God's first message to any of us. He knows too well our sinfulness and our spiritual bankruptcy to begin like that with us. He comes, first of all, with a message of infinite love, inviting each of us to receive Christ as our personal Saviour. Without any waiting on our part, we have the wonderful privilege of accepting the great gift of eternal life from Christ. Just as soon as we receive Christ as our Saviour, we come into possession of eternal life, and we find ourselves in a position of wonderful privilege. Having been justified by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we have the blessed assurance that we are forgiven for His name's sake.

It is important to emphasize the fact that the call and command, "Yield yourselves unto God," apply to believers only. This challenge to full surrender does not come to the unsaved, but to those who have received the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour. Only those who are alive from the dead can present themselves unto God. It is the right, the privilege, and the duty of every saved person not only to recognize Christ's lordship, but to submit to that lordship day by day. All who are saved should yield themselves unto God without any reservation.

To all who have experienced the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit and are now the children of God, He says, "Yield yourselves unto God." These emphatic and startling words constitute a very solemn fact, giving sufficient ground to us all for searching self-examination. They imply that a man may be a Christian and know much of the divine truth without being truly yielded to God. Being addressed to Christians, this verse calls them to enter into a richer, deeper, and fuller life than they have heretofore known, and to enter it by a definite act of surrender or yielding. When those whose souls the Lord has saved do not yield themselves to God, they dishonor the Lord, hinder His work in the world, and bring disrepute upon the name of the family of God.

Matthew Arnold said that the object of religion is conduct, but another corrected him by saying that its object is character, for what one is is of far greater importance than what he does. But there is something that is preliminary and essential to right character. Character is built up gradually by conduct. Character is formed by a process of becoming. But we ask the question, What is the secret of becoming? The secret of becoming is a right condition of being. There must be right being before there can be right conduct, and there must be right conduct before there can be right character. Therefore, you must begin with something that comes before conduct and character, namely, the condition of the soul. You may be a Christian, you may remember distinctly when and where you were brought into God's family, and yet there is something lacking in the condition of your soul at present. You have not fully yielded yourself unto God.

What a pity that so many are in a state of spiritual babyhood, even though they have been professing Christians for years! They are cold, cross, critical, and carnal. Unless they state that they are Christians, nobody would ever suspect that they are, because of their manner of life. This arrested development is caused by their failure to yield themselves unto God.

In addition to receiving Christ as your Saviour, there must be the presentation of that which He has saved. He asks you to yield yourself unto Him, or to remove your hands from that which belongs to Him. Bring yourself as you are, stand as you are, with all that you are, with all that you possess, and with all that you hope to be, and present it all to the Lord. Bow in His presence and say, "Lord, I do acknowledge the deeper step, that what Thou hast purchased, Thou has a right to possess, and here and now I present it unto Thee."

Yielding is an image carried over from the world of matter into the world of the mind. In every case of yielding you have pressure meeting with resistance and overcoming it. The yielding point is reached when man's resistance gives way under God's pressure. As used in this verse yield does not mean capitulation, as in the case of a defeated soldier who is about to be slain, but rather with the consent of all that is within him he presents or offers himself for service. The best Christians are the best at yielding, and they are always in the yielding mood.

I. Yield to a Person.

"Yield yourselves unto God." Yield to the God Whom you have come to trust, to know, and to love. Have you yielded to Him? All that we are, have, and can do should be dedicated to God, and devoted to His service and honor. The being which we have is derived from Him; every blessing which we enjoy is the fruit of His bounty; and every talent by which we are distinguished was bestowed by Him. To Him, therefore, we ought to be entirely yielded, and at all times we should be employed in doing that which will advance His cause and contribute to His glory. We have experienced His love, been enriched by His bounty, and been preserved by His care.

"Yield yourselves unto God." The word "yield" is in the aorist tense, signifying an act taken decisively, irrevocably, once-and-for-all. Has there been a time in your life when you yielded yourself unto God, once-and-for-all? Has there been a time when you took all you were, all that you had, and all that you hoped to be and laid them on the altar? Have you ever done that? You must do so. This is a command, and not an option. When you definitely present yourself to the Lord to be His entirely and forever, the power of the Holy Spirit will come into your life and enrich it beyond description.

"In full and glad surrender
I give myself to Thee;
Thine utterly and only,
And evermore to be."

Have you ever done that? I am confident that the answer in many a heart is "No. I have received Christ as my Saviour, but I have never yielded myself to God." Yielding yourself to God is a definite and once-and-for-all act on your part. Then, the act is followed by a daily, moment-by-moment attitude. In other words, the crisis is followed by a process. Won't you take your life, and your all, and place it fully, voluntarily, unreservedly, and eternally in God's hand?

The importance of yielding yourself to God cannot be overestimated. Your body is the only medium through which your soul can come in contact with other people. It is the organ of the soul, the means of its manifestation and activities. That is why the body is spoken of as the instrument of righteousness or unrighteousness. Unfortunately, many Christians yield their bodies to Satan and through them he does his devastating work. So many give their tongues to Satan and let him use them to speak that which is unkind, bitter or false. The feet of many Christians walk in ways that do not please God. The eyes of many are used to behold sin and to carry to the heart that which defiles it.

You can yield your body to Satan; such yielding leads to bitter slavery. Of course, there are some pleasures of sin to be derived from this yielding to Satan. People would not sin as much as they do if there were not some pleasures in it. There are pleasures in sin, but the Bible adds a postscript to this fact in the words "for a season." Pleasures of sin are for a season only. They, they turn sour, blind you to a clear vision of God, twist and warp your life, fetter you with habits that you cannot break easily, leave others heartbroken, and grieve the loving heart of Christ.

II. Yield for a Purpose.

"Yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." Yield yourselves unto God as weapons of good for His own purposes." The purpose of this yielding is linked to the person of God. What is the purpose of God to Whom we are to yield ourselves? It is that our bodies may be employed in the service of God. We are to yield ourselves to God and to give a prompt and cheerful obedience to whatever He commands. Our best interests are involved in our compliance with His blessed will. It is such a pity that so many people seem to think that the Lord is going to deprive them of some choice blessings if they yield themselves to Him. The truth is that the yielded life is the only one that is really pleasing to God or truly satisfying to ourselves.

God needs your eyes, through which to look upon the world with compassion; with a compassion that will care enough to go, to speak, to witness and to pray. God needs your mind, with which to conceive ways by which the needs of the world can be met. God needs your heart to throb with concern and compassion. God needs your tongue with which to tell what Christ has done for sinners, and to speak for righteousness. There are forces of evil that must be opposed. There is ignorance that must be dispelled. There are hurts that must be healed. There is bondage to sin that must be broken. There are souls that need to be introduced to Christ. There is guidance that must be given. There are burdens that need to be borne. There is all the immeasurable need wrapped up in that one word, "others;" for all of these things God needs you.

III. Yield at a Price.

"Yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." Yield at a price: "as those that are live from the dead," "as men living after death: living in His Son's risen life." Here we have two thoughts -- the thought of death and the thought of life. In this thought of death there is something that is costly. There is that in our lives for which God does

not have any purpose other than that it should die. There is that which is in essence sin, that which is inconsistent and incompatible with the character of God. There may be that in your life which has to die. But remember our text speaks of us "as men living after death." So, there is a life to be found, as well as a loss to be suffered. The life that is to be found is a fulness of life, an experience of an adequacy of grace that is sufficient, and a transformed life and character which point others to the Christ Who has saved and sustained us.

To yield my life fully to the Lord means that I tell Him that I am willing and ready to be what He wants me to be, to go where He wants me to go, and to do what He wants me to do. It means that I present to Him all that I am, all that I have, and all that I hope to be. This sort of yielding makes for a joyful life. It also means the enjoyment of an enlarged and fuller life. We shall discover that God can and will do so many things through us that we could never do if we kept the control of ourselves and our lives. If you will yield yourself to our gracious Lord, there is no way of knowing how much He will enrich and enlarge your life for His glory and for the good of others. Complete yielding always precedes full blessedness. Yield yourself now to the will of God. God wants you and needs you. It is amazing what God can do through a life that is yielded completely to Him. Yield yourself to Him and He will bless and use you. You may say, "I do not have the power to yield." The truth is that you have had too much power to yield, and that accounts for your resistance to the will of God. Since it does not take any strength to yield, obey the command of our text now and "Yield yourselves unto God."