

ALL FOR CHRIST

"How much owest thou unto my Lord?" Luke 16:5.

Before one can experience the highest and best in life, a complete dedication of all to Christ is absolutely necessary. A surrendered life involves the laying of everything on the altar for Christ.

"Is your all on the altar of sacrifice laid?
Your heart does the Spirit control?
You can only be blessed, and have peace and sweet rest,
As you yield Him your body and soul."

Have you, in response to the claim of His "amazing grace," yielded Him your heart and life and all? Can you say with the hymn writer, even now,

"All to Jesus I surrender,
All to Him I freely give;
I will ever love and trust Him,
In His presence daily live.

All to Jesus I surrender,
Humbly at His feet I bow,
Worldly pleasures all forsaken,
Take me, Jesus, take me now.

All to Jesus I surrender,
Make me, Saviour, wholly Thine;
Let me feel the Holy Spirit,
Truly know that Thou art mine.

All to Jesus I surrender,
Lord, I give myself to Thee;
Fill me with Thy love and power,
Let Thy blessing fall on me.

All to Jesus I surrender,
Now I feel the sacred flame;
Oh, the joy of full salvation!
Glory, glory to His name!

I surrender all, I surrender all,
All to Thee, my blessed Saviour, I surrender all."

I. ALL OF WHAT FOR CHRIST?

1. My Personality -- All that I am.

(1) My body -- the physical.

"Present your bodies."

"Glorify God in your body."

No consecration is complete that does not include all your physical powers. Dedication of body to the Lord is the surest safeguard against the tyranny of sensual sin. The scriptures warn us against the sins of the flesh, such as, gluttony, drunkenness, immorality and murder. What does Christ see when He looks at our bodies today? Does He see misuse, abuse, pollution? Does He find the powers of our bodies prostituted for unholy ends, unworthy objects, and impure pursuits? "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

"Thou hast no tongue O Christ as once of old
To tell the story of Thy love divine;
The story's still the same, so sweet, so true,
But there is no tongue to tell it out --
But mine.

Thou hast no hands O Christ as once of old
To feed the multitude with bread divine;
Thou hast the living bread, enough for all,
But there is no hand to give it out --
But mine.

Thou hast no feet O Christ as once of old
To go where Thy lost sheep in sorrow pine;
Thy love is still the same, as deep, as true,
But now Thou hast no feet to go --
But mine.

And shall I use these ransomed powers of mine
For things that only minister to me?
Lord take my tongue, my hands, my feet, my heart,
And let me live and love and give for Thee."

(2) My mind -- the intellectual.

Am I willing to submit to Christ's government all my thinking, reading, study; all upon which I ponder, brood, meditate; all my imaginations and contemplations? Am I willing to let Christ regulate my thoughts and the food upon which I feed them? Thoughts must be fed as well as anything else. "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he."

(3) My heart -- the emotional.

Consecration must also reach the sphere of our emotions. Christ claims the control of all our loves and hates, our likes and dislikes. Christ does not claim the first place in human affections for any other reason than that of our highest good.

(4) My will -- the volitional.

The central citadel of our being is the will. When the will yields, everything yields. Consecration, therefore, involves the surrender of every choice, decision and desire to the loving and wise will of God. What a tremendous thing free will is, with which God has endowed us! It is a priceless treasure, a high dignity, but at the same time it can lead to disaster. You can say "Yes" or "No" to God. You can take the power and privilege of choice and reach the heights of glorious achievement or sink to the depths of ignominious shame. The divine plan is always for our enrichment. It is His purpose that we shall be a blessing to the world. His good and perfect will is always based on infinite love and wisdom. Why then should we hesitate to yield to it? His will is not something to be dreaded, nor accepted reluctantly. Our attitude toward it should always be that of glad acceptance and whole-hearted cooperation.

2. My Possessions -- All that I have.

(1) Self.

Christ wants body, soul and spirit. No substitute can satisfy.

"Take myself and I will be
Ever, only, all for Thee."

Lay self on the altar and say,

"I'll go where you want me to go, dear Lord
Over mountain, or plain, or sea;
I'll say what you want me to say, dear Lord
I'll be what you want me to be."

(2) Talents.

He gives talents to all. They are not given to be used for ourselves. What right have we to use them selfishly? They are to be developed, invested, and used for Him in His service. We have talents, the world is trying to claim them, let us lay them at the feet of our Lord and He will take them and multiply them even as He took the small boy's lunch, and with it fed the multitude.

(3) Time.

We often wish we had more time. Yet, we have all the time there is. Most people have time for everything except God. Our trouble is that we often misuse time in selfish pursuits that do not count. Time is short, precious, easily misspent, never recalled, has to be accounted for, and should be rightfully used. Well may we pray:

"Take my life and let it be
Consecrated Lord to Thee.
Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in ceaseless praise."

(4) Money.

Consecration is recognition of Christ's claim to Lordship over all property. It is His, not ours. He is the Senior Partner, the Managing Director. He does not mean for us to cease to have possessions, but He does claim the right to control our use of them. It is not a question of "How much of my money will I give to the Lord," but rather, "How much of the Lord's money will I keep for myself?" Some day He will call us to account for our stewardship. When President Garfield was slowly recovering after an attempted assassination, the doctors ordered him to a cool, quiet place for convalescence. A specially constructed railway was planned that he might be conveyed to such a spot without any great strain. During the negotiations for the laying of the line, a certain farmer, not knowing for whom the work was being done, objected when the proposal was made to lay the line near his house. But when he was told that it was being done for the President, he exclaimed, "If it is for our President Garfield, you can run it right through my house if you like." What a difference it would make if we placed every earthly possession at Christ's disposal in the same way!

(5) Influence.

Each person has and exerts an influence. "None of us liveth unto himself." Influence is either voluntary or involuntary. It is permanent in its character, it involves others, and we are responsible for it. It's results are good or bad, and it lives on after us.

3. My Plans -- All that I hope to be.

Youth is the time for castle building. Plans and ambitions for the future fill our minds. The call for adventure and the appeal of the romantic beckon us on, and life is full of great thoughts and questions. There are many claimants for our lives. Self wants it. The world wants it. Satan wants it. Christ also wants it. He asks us to come to Him as we are, bring Him what we have, give Him our all, and stand by Him whatever the cost. He and He alone can make the best of our lives, cause us to realize their highest possibilities. Christ has claimed many lives and made them gloriously worth while. When our plans are surrendered to Him, He does not blight them, but He blesses them. Unconditionally, unreservedly, ungrudgingly, they are all to be laid upon the altar to be wholly His. They are to be used by Him and for Him.

II. WHY GIVE ALL TO CHRIST?

1. He wants it.

Nothing less than all will satisfy Him. It is not some of our interest, time, money and influence that He wants, but our very selves -- all that we are, and have, and have it in us to become, He asks us to lay down in glad surrender at His feet now. He wants us to trust Him, obey Him, follow Him, and work for Him. He wants us to know His will and do His will.

2. He is entitled to it.

He made us, has kept us, has cared for us, and has redeemed us. "Ye are Christ's." He chose us, bought us, and is our Shepherd, therefore, He has every right to claim the full possession of us.

3. He deserves it.

This is true because of Who He is and what He has done for us. Obligation always follows privilege, just as a shadow follows the man. Let us acknowledge our obligations to Him. We do not appreciate their magnitude. Doing business for eternity, we want to do it with our eyes open. Put the book of your indebtedness on your table then. Gather together all the things you have ever done for God, and put them in one line, then add them up. Then gather together all the things that God has done for you, put them in one line, and add them up; subtract the lesser from the greater. If God owes us, He is rich, and can pay. If we owe God, let us be honest, and try to pay. "How much owest thou unto my Lord?" Look at our bills of indebtedness: --

(1) The bill for rent.

This world is the house that God built for us to live in. He has it already furnished. What a carpet! --the grass interwoven with the figure of flowers. What a ceiling! -- the frescoed sky. What tapestried pillars! -- the rocks. What a front door! -- the flaming sunrise through which the day comes in. What a back door! -- the sunset, through which the day goes out. What a chandelier and candelabra! -- the sun and the stars. Are we ready to pay our rent?

(2) The bill for board.

We pay the butcher, the baker, and the grocer, but we do not always pay the God who makes the food, and who gives us the money with which to buy it.

(3) The bill for clothes.

Think of how much it has taken to supply you through life.

(4) The bill for families.

Have you children in your home? Have they eyesight, when so many have been born blind? hearing, when so many have been born deaf? Can they talk and sing, when so many have been born dumb? Have they good use of their feet and legs, when so many have been born cripples? Who gave you those happy, healthy, romping children? How much will you take for them?

(5) The bill for redemption.

Christ was your substitute and died for you. Through the years He has been not only your Saviour, but also your Friend, Teacher and Guide. Life takes on a richer hue, a deeper purpose, and has a higher value because of Him.

In view of these facts, just think of what we owe to Christ. I owe Him: --

a. My life.

He has saved it, and it is His. He has made it what it is. "By the grace of God I am what I am." But I owe Him more than merely what I am. I owe Him what I can be through His grace.

b. My love.

Through the years He has loved me. He has never done me aught but good. He has given me a host of friends.

c. My loyalty.

This is one gift any man can make Jesus. We all cannot give an equal amount of money, time, nor service, but we can give an unquestioned loyalty. Am I putting Him first, or am I letting other things come first? Give Him our best. Give Him life with the bloom on it -- not when it is faded and worn.

III. WHEN SHOULD WE GIVE OUR ALL TO CHRIST?

Now. It is God's time, the right time, the best time, and might be the only time. Dedicate your all to Him now, and spend the remainder of your life in following Him and serving humanity. Give your best to Him and the best will come back to you. Lay your all on the altar. Say: --

"Naught that I have my own I call,
I hold it for the Giver;
My heart, my life, my hope, my all,
Are His, and His forever."