

"YIELD YOURSELVES UNTO GOD"

"Neither yield ye 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.

Matthew Arnold said that the object of religion is conduct. Another corrected him with the remark that the object of religion is character, for what a man is is far more important than what he does. But there is something that is preliminary and essential to right character. We know that character is built up gradually by conduct. Character is formed by a process of becoming. What, then, is the secret of becoming? The secret of becoming what one ought to be is a right condition of the soul. Preliminary to the process of becoming is a right condition of being. One must be right with the Lord before his conduct before men will be what it ought to be. After one's relationship with the Lord is right his conduct and his character can be right also. Therefore, you must begin with something that comes before conduct and character, namely, the spiritual condition of the soul. One may be a Christian and yet his soul not be in the proper condition. The right condition of the soul of the Christian is brought about by the yielding of self to the Lord.

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. This call to yield yourself unto God does not come to the unsaved, but to those who have received the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour. We cannot give anything to the Lord that is acceptable to Him until we have received the gift of His salvation. But, having been saved, the call and the challenge come to us to yield ourselves unto God. The emphatic and startling words, "Yield yourselves unto God," are addressed to Christians who have experienced the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit, to those who are alive unto God and know it. This is a very solemn fact, which certainly gives ground for searching self-examination, for it implies that one may be a Christian and know much of divine truth without being truly yielded to God. It challenges all Christians to enter a richer, deeper and fuller life than they have known heretofore. If you are a child of God, you are very precious to Him, and it is tremendously important that you yield yourself to Him. Don't yield the members of your body as instruments of unrighteousness, but rather yield them as weapons of righteousness on the Lord's side.

I. A Possession.

"Yield yourselves unto God." It is the yielding of the whole personality to the Lord -- the body, the mind, the heart, and the will. All that we are, have and can do should be dedicated or yielded to God and devoted to His service. He made us and has sustained us. Every blessing which we receive is the fruit of His bounty. Every talent which we possess was bestowed upon us by Him.

These words, "Yield yourselves unto God," constitute a call to personal dedication. To you who have accepted Christ as your Saviour, and have passed from death unto life, Christ asks you to yield yourselves to Him and to let Him take complete possession of you and control all that you are and all that you have.

II. A Person.

"Yield yourselves unto God." Either we yield ourselves to God as instruments of righteousness or to Satan as instruments of unrighteousness. We are challenged to yield ourselves unto God as His possession to be used in His service.

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. Then, 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.

It is our duty to yield ourselves unto God. Since our Lord has saved us, He asks us to assign to Him the control of all that we are and have. We should yield to Him and be controlled by Him. Let Him control our bodies, our minds, our emotions, our affections, our wills, our words and our actions. Does Christ have the first place in your heart? Do you love Him enough to give Him His rightful place? He said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33). Yield your will to the will of God. The will is the central faculty of the human soul; it is that which makes us what we are. When the will is yielded to God the citadel of man's being is captured. It is in the will that self and Satan enthrone themselves; it is in the will that the fiercest struggle is made.

"Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee;
Take my hands and let them move
At the impulse of Thy love.

Take my feet, and let them be
Swift and beautiful for Thee;
Take my voice, and let me sing,
Always, only, for my King.

Take my silver and my gold,
Not a mite would I withhold;
Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my will, and make it thine,
It shall be no longer mine;
Take my heart, it is Thine own,
It shall be Thy royal throne.

Lord, I give my life to Thee,
Thine forevermore to be;
Lord, I give my life to Thee,
Thine forevermore to be."

"Yield yourselves unto God." How inclusive the gift and how decisive is the step that is to be taken! The word "yield" is in the aorist tense, signifying an act taken decisively, irrevocably, once and for all. Has there been such a moment in your life, when you yielded yourself unto God? 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.

III. 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 as instruments and not as ornaments. This surrender will lead to something. "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.

The greatest folly imaginable is to refuse to yield to the will of God. The unrest and friction which prevail in the lives of so many today are due to their refusal to yield in glad surrender to the will of God. Some give assent to Christ's claim over certain parts of their lives, but have dissented from His claim over other parts of their lives, but He rightfully claims the body, the mind, the emotions, the will and the affections. Yielding to God makes us alert to the foe and sure of the possibility of resisting him. The more completely you yield to God in the face of the assaults of Satan and in the light of life's daily duties, the more power you will receive from God to be true overcomers. The conflict for each of us will ever be whether God's will or the human will is to be supreme.

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

Life is to be yielded to God fully, voluntarily, unreservedly and eternally.

IV. 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 alive 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 you and use you. You may say, "I do not have the 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."