



CONSECRATION

Course 5, *Real Christian Living*, Lesson 5

The Problem: Dwight L. Moody, one of the greatest evangelists of the nineteenth century, brought thousands to Christ through his ministry. In 1872, at a meeting Moody attended, Henry Varley quietly proclaimed: "The world has yet to see what God can do with and for and through and in a man who is fully and wholly consecrated to Him." Moody could not shake those words. The following weekend, while listening to Charles Spurgeon preach, Varley's statement echoed in his mind: "The world has yet to see!"

What Varley did not say was just as powerful—God does not require brilliance, wealth, education, or fame. He simply seeks a heart wholly surrendered to Him. Moved by this realization, Moody whispered a prayer: "By the Holy Spirit in me, I'll be one of those men." As tears streamed down his cheeks, concerned believers approached, thinking he was under conviction. But they soon realized his tears were not of sorrow, but of joy—the joy of surrendering to God's great purpose. Moody's life became a testimony to the power of consecration—how God can use someone when they are fully surrendered.

Throughout history, God has worked powerfully through those who surrender fully to Him. While Jesus remains the ultimate example of perfect consecration, countless others have demonstrated the transformative impact of a life devoted to His will.

God assures us that when we seek Him wholeheartedly, we will find Him (Jeremiah 29:13). But what does it mean to seek God with all our heart? This leads us to the idea of consecration—a word that speaks of total devotion and surrender to Him. The word "consecration" signifies:

- Devotion
- Dedication
- Being set apart for a holy purpose
- The act of making or declaring sacred

Jesus Himself embodied this consecration, declaring: "*For their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth*" John 17:19. To be sanctified is to be made holy by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit—set apart for God's service and glory.

But how can imperfect, sinful humans experience this? How can we devote all of ourselves to God?

- Is consecration worth it?
- What must we surrender? What do we gain?
- How do we fully submit to God's will?
- Does consecration mean abandoning normal life—family, careers, relationships?

The ultimate joy of belonging to Christ far outweighs the temporary comforts of life. Those who choose total consecration discover that what they gain in Christ surpasses anything they leave behind. This lesson is about trusting God with everything, believing that His plans bring the greatest fulfillment. Let us turn to the Scriptures and find out how consecration to God leads to transformation, peace, and a life of eternal purpose.

Objectives:

- I. We recognize that, by nature, we are alienated from God, and that true dedication to His will is contrary to our natural inclinations.
- II. We understand that consecration requires yielding our whole heart to God, allowing Him to transform us completely.
- III. We examine what we must surrender and what we gain when we commit ourselves wholly to the Lord.
- IV. We realize that the only lasting and effective motivation for this kind of life is love for Christ.
- V. We explore how to fully surrender to God, overcoming the struggles of our human nature and life's challenges, so that we may truly become what Christ desires us to be.

I. BY NATURE WE ARE ALIENATED FROM GOD

The greatest battle we face in life is the battle against self. Our fallen nature makes us naturally inclined to yield to sinful desires rather than choosing what aligns with God's will. While we may recognize the need for righteousness, our human tendencies often pull us toward selfishness, pride, and rebellion. Scripture vividly portrays the spiritual condition of a person who is not fully surrendered to Christ. Without His transforming power, the heart remains restless, enslaved to sin, and unable to experience true peace. But the good news is that victory over self is possible—not through human effort alone, but through the power of Christ working within us.

The Word:

1. How does the Apostle Paul describe the natural condition of the person who has no relationship with Christ?
Ephesians 2:1-3
2. Who takes captive the person who is not controlled by divine power? 2 Timothy 2:26
3. What vivid imagery did Isaiah use to describe the spiritual state of people who are not consecrated to God?
Isaiah 1:5-6

Explanation: In this world, two spiritual forces compete for human allegiance—God and Satan. There is no neutral ground; if you are not surrendered to God, you are under the dominion of darkness. Without Christ's transforming power, sin remains unconquered, and the mind drifts away from purity and holiness. On our own, we cannot overpower Satan's influence. He and his countless demons seek to entice, deceive, and enslave, leading people down paths their better judgment warns against. No human will is strong enough to overcome the pull of sin—but there is hope. The only solution is a relationship with Jesus Christ. When we align ourselves with Him, we gain access to the only power in the universe capable of overcoming evil and restoring holiness.

Relevance: The struggles you face—those desires and habits that seem too strong to overcome—find their solution only in Christ. You may have self-discipline in certain areas, but only His power can bring true victory. Jesus is not merely a moral example—He is the source of transformation, the One who breaks bondage and replaces it with freedom, strength, and new life.

II. CONSECRATION MEANS YIELDING OUR WHOLE HEART (SELF) TO GOD

Consecration is both a decisive commitment and an ongoing journey, learning step by step to relinquish control and allow His Spirit to reshape our lives. The key is that true consecration begins with a willing heart. Even if the process takes time, it should start with a conscious decision to trust, obey, and walk in deeper relationship with Him. Spiritual growth is not instant perfection—it's a continual refining process as we learn to align our thoughts, actions, and desires with God's will. The more we surrender, the more freedom we experience in Christ.

God calls us to complete surrender. He desires our wholehearted trust, asking us to give Him our entire lives without reservation. Holding onto anything contrary to His will, simply because we enjoy it, places a barrier between us and Christ, jeopardizing the intimacy of our relationship with Him. Anything less than full surrender keeps us from experiencing the fullness of His love, guidance, and transforming power.

The Word:

4. What degree of surrender to His will does Jesus want? Luke 14:33; Matthew 10:37-39
5. With how much of our hearts are we to love God? Matthew 22:37
6. Under what circumstances can we find a meaningful and lasting relationship with God? Jeremiah 29:13

Explanation: When Jesus said, "*So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions*" (Luke 14:33), He was not commanding believers to abandon every good thing in their lives. Instead, He was teaching that true discipleship requires absolute devotion to God. God calls people to different levels of sacrifice, but the underlying principle is the same: our love for Him must be greater than our attachment to anything else. If our homes, families, possessions, or ambitions take precedence over Him, they become idols—replacing God's rightful place in our hearts. Christ desires our full affection and dedication, not to deprive us, but to give us something far greater: a life enriched by His presence and the most meaningful relationships shaped by His love.

Relevance: Your deepest happiness and fulfillment come from wholehearted surrender to Christ. Without a genuine heart connection with Him, life lacks lasting joy, purpose, and spiritual vitality. When you yield fully to Him, you step into the fullness of who you were created to be. True consecration does not diminish your personality and character—it elevates them, allowing you to achieve your greatest potential under the guidance of the One who knows you best.

III. WHAT DO WE SURRENDER AND WHAT DO WE GAIN?

As we draw closer to Christ, we must surrender anything that creates distance between us and Him. This process is not always immediate—sometimes, we recognize obstacles gradually as His Spirit reveals them to us. What separates one person from the Lord may differ from what hinders another. God works individually in each heart, calling us to surrender specific things that hinder our relationship with Him. This is why our journey of sacrifice must be guided by the conviction of the Holy Spirit and an intentional, prayerful evaluation of His will for our lives. Yet, in every act of surrender, one truth remains constant—what we receive in Christ far outweighs anything we leave behind. His love, peace, and purpose transform us in ways we could never have imagined.

The Word:

7. What did Jesus ask the rich young ruler to give up? Mark 10:21
8. By contrast, how much of his wealth did Zacchaeus give up? Luke 19:8
9. List a few of the idols in people's lives that Jesus asked them to give up:
 - a. 1 Timothy 6:10
 - b. Psalm 49:12; John 5:44
 - c. Proverbs 21:17; 2 Peter 2:13
10. Does God want our responses to His conviction to be based on emotion or reason? Isaiah 1:18
11. What supreme gifts does Christ give us when we consecrate our lives wholly to Him? John 10:28; 14:27; 1 John 5:4

Explanation: For the rich young ruler, wealth was his idol—the very thing that stood between him and spiritual life. Jesus, knowing that his attachment to riches would suffocate his faith, called him to surrender everything. Christ does not ask everyone to give up everything in a literal sense. However, He calls all believers to a willingness to surrender anything that stands between them and a full relationship with Him. His invitation to the rich young ruler was not unfair—it was a personal test of devotion. The young man's wealth had become his idol, preventing him from fully following Christ.

Yet, others were asked to give up less. Zacchaeus, for example, gave half of his goods to the poor and repaid fourfold what he had taken dishonestly. The Apostle Paul, on the other hand, sacrificed everything, choosing to become a traveling evangelist for Christ. Yet, to him, it was no loss. He declared joyfully: *"Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord."* Philippians 3:7-8.

Paul understood a profound truth: what he surrendered was nothing compared to what he gained. He could even say, *"Therefore I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ, for whenever I am weak, then I am strong"* 2 Corinthians 12:10.

Jesus does want us to be happy, but true happiness is found in Him, not in material possessions or worldly pleasures. When He asks for surrender, it's not to take from us, but to free us from anything that might hold our hearts captive. God does not call everyone to make the same sacrifices. He desires us to trust His guidance, seeking wisdom and discernment in how we serve Him. Scripture offers no support for hasty, emotional decisions made in the moment—it calls for thoughtful devotion, a willingness to listen and follow His unique purpose for our lives (1 Corinthians 7:20-24).

What He asks us to surrender is never for our harm, but for our good. In return, He offers us:

- Eternal life,
- Peace with God,
- Power to overcome weaknesses,
- Freedom from sin,
- The riches of heaven.

Christ does not take away anything truly valuable—He replaces what we surrender with something infinitely greater.

Relevance Have you fully consecrated your life—everything you are and have—to Christ? True joy is found in wholehearted surrender, where His presence fills every part of your being.

IV. LOVE FOR CHRIST IS OUR MOTIVATION

Surrendering your life to Christ may feel like a great sacrifice—until you do it out of love for Him. When you truly grasp His immense sacrifice for you, giving yourself fully to Him is no longer a burden but a joy!

The Word:

12. What did Christ do to demonstrate His love and inspire our devotion? Isaiah 53:5; Titus 2:14

13. What does love for Christ do for us? John 14:23

Explanation: Christ's love led Him to leave the perfection of heaven, stepping into this broken world to redeem us and transform us into sons and daughters of God. If He willingly gave everything for us, why should we hesitate to give our all for Him? When His love reigns in our hearts, obedience is no longer a duty—it becomes a desire. We long to follow His will, not out of obligation, but because His presence fills us with joy and purpose.

There is no substitute for the indwelling presence of God in our lives. Jesus envisioned His people living in deep fellowship with Him and the Father, bound together in unity and love (John 17:20-22). This divine connection is the foundation of true consecration—a life fully surrendered to Him.

Relevance: Surrendering all to Christ is no sacrifice when you truly behold His love. The cross of Calvary stands as the greatest evidence of God's infinite love for fallen humanity. There is nothing in this life that compares to the significance of Christ's love for you personally. If you were to lose everything, yet still hold on to the gift of His love, you would have eternal life—a treasure beyond all earthly wealth. To belong to Christ is to inherit the glorious riches of heaven, to walk in His divine presence, and to have the unshakable assurance of a future with Him in glory.

V. HOW DO WE SURRENDER ALL TO GOD?

Many ask, "How do I truly surrender myself to God?" Some long to give themselves fully to Him, yet struggle with weak moral power, doubt, and habitual sin. Others may not recognize their need for surrender, feeling self-sufficient yet longing for lasting peace. Some wrestle with fear, disappointment, uncertainty, or a sense of emptiness—unsure of what's missing in their lives.

Yet, God does not reject anyone. He lovingly invites each person to understand the power of their will—a divine gift that enables us to choose Him, even when we cannot change our own hearts. When we exercise this decision in faith, God takes over, working within us both to will and to do according to His good pleasure (Philippians 2:13).

Through genuine and continuing surrender, the Holy Spirit renews and transforms the whole being. Our affections shift toward Christ, our thoughts align with His will, and our lives find harmony and fulfillment in His presence. Surrender is not about losing control—but about gaining true freedom in Him.

The Word:

14. What did Paul say about the strength of his will apart from Christ? Romans 7:18

15. What choice did the prophets offer ancient Israel? Joshua 24:15; 1 Kings 18:21

16. How did Jesus indicate that believing in Him is a matter of personal choice? John 12:36, 44-48; compare John 6:28-29

Explanation: The Bible teaches that human will alone is insufficient to live righteously apart from Christ. Before his conversion, Paul knew what was right, but lacked the power to carry it out. Likewise, while we have the freedom to choose Christ or reject Him, we do not possess the strength to live righteously without His indwelling presence.

Being a disciple of Christ is more than adopting His lifestyle—it is choosing, daily, to let His Spirit dwell within us and transform our hearts. When we believe in Him, we surrender control, allowing Him to live through us. *"I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me"* Galatians 2:19-20. This decision is not merely a moral choice, but a spiritual exchange—we accept His righteousness as a gift, given by the Holy Spirit. See Romans 8:9-10. Through this indwelling power, we experience peace of mind and gain the ability to perform works pleasing to God. See Romans 6:17-22. Even faith itself is a gift from Christ—a divine work in our hearts as we choose to believe (Luke 17:5).

Relevance: When you choose Christ as your Savior and Lord, inviting Him to dwell in your heart, He deepens your love for Him and grants you the grace to surrender fully. The secret to true consecration lies in your daily choice to trust Him for the strength to walk in His ways. He convicts, you choose, He empowers! His victory becomes yours as His presence takes control of your life.

Have you welcomed Christ into your heart today?

Will you continue to choose Him tomorrow, and every day after?

Review Questions

1. True or False
 - a. Only genuine love for Christ is sufficient motivation for total consecration to Him.
 - b. We can surrender all to God only as we choose Christ and allow Him to work through us.
 - c. Living a good life is a matter of developing the natural goodness of our minds.
 - d. God never expects His children to give up everything for Him.
2. Discuss: Why does Christ call some to give up everything for Him? If He desires our happiness, how could surrendering our homes, loved ones, or personal joys ever lead to true fulfillment? Was it unreasonable for Jesus to ask the rich young ruler to sell all his possessions and give to the poor? What does this teach us about consecration and where we place our trust?

Further Study: Ellen G. White, [Steps to Christ](#), Chapter 5.