

## Consecration and Prayer

*Preached By Rev. Norman R. Allen  
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IN order to receive anything from God, we pray and consecrate. And the way to keep what God has given us is to continue to pray and consecrate.

The enemy would do his best to come in like a flood and overthrow us. But God is faithful and He has given us good instructions in His Holy Word. In the 5th chapter of Ecclesiastes, we are told something that is very important:

**"Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.**

**"Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.**

**"For a dream cometh through the multitude of business; and a fool's voice is known by multitude of words.**

**"When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed.**

**"Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.**

**"Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands?**

**"For in the multitude of dreams and many words there are also divers vanities: but fear thou God" (Ecclesiastes 5:1-7).**

As teachers of God's Word, we have two basic intents. Number one is to encourage people to do what God wants them to do. Number two is to keep people from becoming fanatical and falling into the snare of the devil. It is a rather unique responsibility. When some people are inclined to be a little slow and dilatory, we try to stir them to activity for God; but if the enemy can get them to make rash vows and commitments, and act in a fanatical manner, that is equally as bad. In no way do we want to dampen one's ardor or zeal to serve God, but we want to be careful to work in God's way.

### Yielding Unto God

**"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Romans 12:1).**

**In** the sacrifices of the Levitical era, people brought a lamb to be slain as a sacrifice for sin. The lamb gave its life. But God wants living sacrifices today. He wants you — your hands, feet, head, talents, prayers, zeal — all of you. So when you present your life a living sacrifice unto God, He has all of you. But when you pray, if the enemy can get you to say, "Lord, I will do thus and so," and you make some sort of commitment that is almost physically impossible to keep, he has driven you into a trap to rob you of your victory.

You don't have to say, "Lord, I'll pray so many hours a day." Instead, say, "Lord, help me to pray **more**. Help me to pray with all my heart." Then the more you pray, the more you like to pray. The more victory you have, the more you will be able to back up that longing and desire for God's service.

Remember what the Word says, "Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God." We want everybody saved as quickly as possible,- but it is advisable for people to count the cost and see the value and the eternal benefits of the Gospel, so they can move ahead and obtain what God has for them. If they do not understand what is going on, the devil may trip them and cause them to fall. You cannot talk people into the Gospel. The best way is to pray them in. A lot of love and prayer will do more than any one man can do by talking.

You have heard testimonies of those who thanked God for mothers who could pray down conviction. A number of us are here because our mother prayed. Let us do more praying and less talking, more believing and less promising. If we believe God and do what He says, He will answer us. He does not tease His children. He does not hold things out to us and then pull them back when we reach for them. God wants us to believe and receive.

**"Better is it that thou shouldst not vow, than that thou shouldst vow and not pay" (Ecclesiastes 5:5).**

We are expected to keep our word before God and before men. So the preacher in Ecclesiastes was saying: Be careful where you walk. Be careful what you say. Be careful what you do. When we come into God's house, into His temple, we should come in reverently and quietly, and be more ready to hear than to speak. We do not want to desecrate God's house by talking about things of this world, secular business and the like. Jesus said, "My house shall be called the house of prayer" (Matthew 21:13).

Let us turn to Luke the 14th chapter:

**"And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them,**

**"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.**

**"And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.**

**"For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?**

**"Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him?" (Luke 14:25-29).**

We are all very much aware of what it means to plan ahead so that we can know what the end result might be. So often, young people in seeking advice and counsel will say, "Should I do this?" or "Should I do that?" It is good to help them think the matter through to see where it might end. That is true in the Gospel. If you conscientiously think of its benefits, how can you afford not to serve God?

Everyone knows that he must give up his sins to serve God, so why does he hold on to sin? Sin only brings trouble and grief; and a sin sick soul. Sin takes away that which is good, but the Gospel does not take one good thing out of a life. Not one! It adds joy and victory and power. But no one is going to Heaven on flowery beds of ease. Jesus never camouflaged the Gospel. He told the people, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head" (Luke 9:58). He didn't say it is going to be easy. But He said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:20). That takes care of a whole lot of things.

We realize, then, that in coming to the Lord, there are going to be some priorities in our life. Jesus said that if we love Him we will keep His commandments.

**"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26).**

It does not mean to hate in a carnal way, but to let Christ have first place in your heart and life. Temporal things have to take second place. When we deny the world and turn our backs upon it and come to the Lord, then the Lord will sustain us and help us to cut clean from the world.

## **Tribulations or Afflictions**

Many times when troubles come our way we wonder just what is the cause. The Bible says that "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all" (Psalm 34:19).

If we are afflicted, it is not necessarily a sign that we have sinned. But it is a good time to search our heart; and if we have

sinned, it is good to get back to the Lord. If God lets adverse things come our way, it is the time to go back and re-consecrate and rededicate our lives to Him. Say, "Lord, I'm sorry about that. Let the Blood of Jesus flow over it and I will not let it happen again. I will serve You faithfully." We constantly need the Blood of Jesus flowing over our heart, our soul and our mind.

There is a measure of consecration at salvation. You literally surrender your whole life to God when you get saved. You do not come to Him and say, "Lord, I'll let loose of every sin except this or that." The only way you receive salvation is to give all to the Lord, and ask Him to be merciful to you. You do not bargain with God or tell Him the great things you can do for Him and how much you will enrich His kingdom if you enter into it. On the contrary, you plead with God to have mercy upon you that He may enrich your life.

After we have obtained salvation and have committed our lives to the Lord, He begins to work for us from that very point on. But that does not mean that we will not have trials and tribulations. So often new converts find that the enemy throws accusations and trials their way. But if we will take God's Book and use what it says against the devil, we can win the victory. We can take the promises right out of God's Word and stand up to Satan and win every time. The Bible says, "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you" (James 4:7, 8). Let us pray that God will increase our resistance to sin and to the temptations of this old world.

Daily we must rededicate our lives to Him. The consecrations we made ten years ago or yesterday are not sufficient for today. If we have made consecrations and have not kept them, they are of no value now. When we make a commitment to the Lord, He wants us to follow through on it. So when we consecrate our lives to the Lord and we ask for forgiveness and He saves us, then that love in our hearts immediately causes us to want to please God. So we say, "Lord, I will give You my time, my talent, my all — anything You want is at Your disposal." That does not mean that we have to take out our checkbook and see what the balance is and contribute what we have to the church. It doesn't mean that at all. It does mean to hold loosely anything we may have, so that if the Lord calls for it, we will be able to do whatever He asks.

You may say, "Oh, I couldn't go to church Sunday morning, Sunday afternoon, Sunday night, Tuesday night and Friday night!" I have news for you! The new converts complain that we don't have more meetings. They love to be in the house of the Lord. They want to learn more about the things of God.

## Answers in the Bible

It is wonderful to know that God's Word will answer our questions better than any man can answer them. In the 10th chapter of Mark we read:

**"Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee.**

**"And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's,**

**"But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life" (Mark 10:28-30).**

Does that answer the question about putting Christ first? It surely does. Jesus said that in this very present life you will "receive an hundredfold."

I often think when we pillow our head after a busy Sunday — maybe we started off with an early

morning prayer meeting, Sunday school, morning service, young people's meeting in the afternoon, sometimes another service before the night meeting, and then the night service — we are physically tired at 11 o'clock. But when we go to bed, weary in body but blessed in our soul, oh, how well we sleep! Who would trade that for a night in sin? One of those nights would just about wreck some of us.

When we pillow our head we can say: "Lord, if You come tonight, I'll see You in Heaven. But if You allow me to see the light of another day, I will re-consecrate my life to You and live for You." That is peace and tranquility! The Gospel has blessed benefits right here in this world.

There is much turmoil out in the world. People who are trying to get rich are not happy. The people who have the riches are not happy because they are trying to keep other people from getting their riches. But the Christian is trusting God daily, and right here in this present world God blesses them. And this is only a foretaste, just an earnest, of our eternal inheritance of bliss and joy. Sorrow and sighing shall flee away. There will be no more tears, no more suffering, no death and no pain.

Some people do not have any blood relatives at all in the Gospel, but God has given all of us Christian brothers and sisters who care for us and pray for us. They encourage us. The world doesn't have that. You can't buy friendship either. But God gives us wonderful Christian relationships. So we have the best in this present life when we consecrate our lives to the Lord.

Some people do not think it is important to keep their consecrations up to date. But you never know when there is going to be an emergency. If you are prayed up, and if you have been reading God's Word and His promises are clear in your mind, His Word is going to be a great benefit to you in time of emergency. The Spirit of God can bring to your remembrance the things that you have read. But you have to read them before He can bring them to your remembrance. You cannot remember anything that you did not once know.

When trials come, you can say, "Lord, You took me through all those other tests. You can take me through this one." Confidence in God builds up in our lives day by day. We tell young people sometimes, "You are becoming today what you will be tomorrow." And that works for older people, too.

You trust God for the headache today, you trust God for the cold. Then you have a serious illness later on and you can say, "I have always trusted God. He has always healed me. He will heal me of this, too." You have a backlog of faith built up. When you have kept those consecrations you made to God and have done your part, then you know for sure that He will do His part. So it is important that you keep these things up to date.

## An Example of Faith

Turn to Genesis 22:

This chapter tells us of Abraham's trial of faith — and it was because he loved and served God. He walked and talked with God; and he obeyed God. He was a friend of God — and for God to say that you are His friend is a real statement. But that is what God said about Abraham. And you can have that same testimony. **"And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am" (Genesis 22:1).**

Now God knows where we are but it is a good thing for us to know where we are. God allows some things to happen to us to help us find our weaknesses so we can overcome them. We can draw nigh to the Lord and get His help in these situations. I am sure God knew what Abraham was going to do. But Abraham needed to know the power of God and how God would deliver. The things that God lets come our way are for our spiritual edification. If we will turn our sorrows into treasures, if we will turn our trials into blessings, we will be stronger in the Lord. We want to try that.

When God called, Abraham answered:

**"Behold, here I am.**

**"And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the**

mountains which I will tell thee of.

**"And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.**

**"Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.**

**"And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you."**

That is a statement of faith.

**"And. Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.**

**"And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?**

**"And Abraham said, My son, God will provide him self a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.**

**"And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.**

**"And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.**

**"And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am**

Abraham kept his ear open to the Voice of the Lord! Abraham could have said at this point, "God told me to do it and I am going to do it." But he was listening! One of the rules in the military service is that you obey the last command until further orders. So when God gives us a command, we must start right out to do what God says. When he sees that we are doing what He said, He may give us another command, but we do not want to go blindly on. We want to be very attentive to the Voice of God, so we can hear His next command. Abraham was!

**"And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.**

**"And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.**

**"And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the Mount of the LORD it shall be seen" (Genesis 22:1-14).**

"Jehovah-jireh" means God will provide. Doesn't He provide wonderfully! When he said, "God will provide himself a lamb," he was speaking of the fact that God would undertake in this situation. But he was also speaking prophetically of another situation in which God sent Jesus, His only begotten Son, as the Lamb of God to take away the sins of the world.

God honored Abraham's faith throughout his life, and It was imputed to him for righteousness" (Romans 4:22).

**"By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac" (Hebrews 11:17).**

Though Abraham did not literally slay his son, this Scripture says Abraham "offered up Isaac." In Abraham's heart and in his mind, this son of promise for whom he had waited nearly 25 years, was already offered up, because he was on his way to do what God had commanded.

If you, as a parent, honor God and put Him first in everything you do, you are laying a good

foundation in the hearts of your little ones, and as they grow up they will say, "This is what Mother and Dad did, and God answered their prayers."

So let us be careful of the examples we set. God gave Abraham credit for having offered up Isaac.

**"By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,**

**"Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:**

**"Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received *him in a figure*" (Hebrews 11:17-19).**

Turn to Matthew 6:33:

**"Seek ye first *the* kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."**

If we put Christ first, houses and lands and family and all of these other things will fall into their rightful order. God knows what things we have **need** of. But let God do the choosing. Let Him do the leading. When we consecrate our lives to the Lord, we are saying in so many words, "Lord, You are the Potter, I am the clay. You mold me and fashion me any way You want me."

## **Lay Aside All Weights**

**"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,**

**"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.**

**"For consider him that endureth such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.**

**"Ye have not resisted unto blood, striving against sin" (Hebrews 12:1-4).**

When you leave this camp meeting and are far away from Christian friends with whom you can fellowship, remember the cloud of witnesses that were together here on these grounds — **people** who believed God's Word **and** whose prayers were answered.

Remember what you have been taught here. Do not get into debt over your head. Do not do anything that you know is contrary to God's will and then ask Him to bail you out. Obey God's Word along all lines. The easiest way to get out of trouble is to stay out of it. The easiest way to get answers to prayer is to keep on praying ground. When we follow the Lord daily, He is there morning, noon and night.

There is much more we could say, but our prayer is that each one of us will stand firm and steadfast together. Let us pray for our Overseer. Let us pray for our pastors, for all our ministers, missionaries, young people's leaders and our Sunday school teachers. They are all dispensers of the Word of God. So let us all band together now and say, "Lord, I want not only my own life up to par, and all my consecrations made, but I want to hold up the hands of those who bear the heavier burdens." Let us pray and consecrate and keep our minds stayed on God. If we do this, He in turn, will keep us in perfect peace and grant our needs day by day. — N. A.