

TEXT 2 Samuel 24:17-25; Romans 12:1,2

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to explain that there is nothing so essential to the growth of Christian experience as consecration. There is nothing that will as surely bring the power for service into one's life as keeping that life constantly on the altar and at the bidding of God's will.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart. Psalm 40:8

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH I will surely buy it of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing. 2 Samuel 24:24

ANSWER TITLE: **Gift to God**

SEARCH TITLE: **Consecration**

REFERENCE INFORMATION

The dictionary definition of *consecrate* is "to set apart as holy; make or declare sacred for religious use," also "to devote entirely; dedicate." In the Bible we have examples of consecrating both lives and material possessions to the Lord.

When God gave Moses the Law on Mt. Sinai, He gave explicit instructions concerning the consecrating of the priests, the tabernacle, and all that pertained to the tabernacle. Everything was to be holy unto the Lord. The ceremony of consecration was not to be without the shedding of blood. A bullock was offered as a sin offering for Aaron and his sons. Then two rams were to be offered, one for a burnt offering and the second was called "a ram of consecration." Its blood was put on the priests—the tip of the right ear, the right thumb, and the right great toe—evidently symbolizing entire consecration. Also, blood was sprinkled

on the altar and on the priests' garments and they were considered holy unto the Lord.

While we do not offer animals as they did in Old Testament times, there are many similarities that can be noted. God called Aaron and his sons to present themselves before the Lord. Today the call is universal, but we must answer the call even as Aaron and his sons did. A sin offering was made, but Christ offered Himself, shedding His Blood for us.

Many offerings of animals were made for different purposes, but the Apostle Paul exhorts us to "present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Romans 12:1). We can expect our lives to be blessed of the Lord if we are fully consecrated to Him.

YOUR OPENER

Consecration

RESPONSES

1. Animal and bird sacrifices were used to receive atonement for sin. But in addition, some sacrifices were used to show consecration. God has always desired that mankind should worship Him. In order to truly worship God, we must consecrate ourselves to Him. When a man is saved he not only repents of his sins, he promises to serve God. Ask your students to describe the route to the deeper experiences that God has for all who seek Him. Consecration, of course, is the key to all that we receive from God.

2. He would not offer or consecrate something that did not belong to him. Probably there would have been no answer to David's prayer if no consecration had been involved. Ask the students if they can consecrate something they do not own. Someone may say he can consecrate his future to God. This is true in the sense he can determine to do so, but this is why daily consecration is necessary. We live, really, only one moment at a time. Another may say he can consecrate a hope; for example, he hopes to have an automobile and, if and when this materializes, he will use it in the Lord's service.

3. The Lord was intreated for the land and the plague was stayed from Israel. David's prayer of anguish brought direction from the Prophet Gad for David to make an altar unto the Lord at the threshingfloor of Araunah.

4. When all his possessions were swept away, Job could still say, "Blessed be the name of the LORD." Rehearse with your students how true, wholehearted consecration puts more value upon our relationship with God than on temporal things. How many of us could pass the test that Job went through? Help the students understand that only by loving God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength could such victory be gained; and that only comes by consecrating our all to Him.

TEXT: 2 Samuel 24:17-25; Romans 12:1,2

KEY VERSE: I will surely buy it of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing. — 2 Samuel 24:24

RESOURCE MATERIAL: Tract No. 46 — Consecration

There is nothing so honored of God as a holy, consecrated life, nothing as essential to growth in Christian experience, and nothing that will as surely bring the presence of God into the life. Consecration is the route to everything we receive from God: salvation, sanctification, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, divine healing, or any other blessing. Consecrations of years back will not suffice to retain God's blessing, but one's life must be yielded to God daily.

1. In Old Testament times what things were often used to show consecration (Exodus 29:21,22)? Why do you think God instituted the rituals surrounding these sacrifices?

2. Why did David insist on paying for the threshing floor and the oxen? What would have been the probable result if David had accepted Araunah's offer and sacrificed without any payment?

3. What was the result of David's actions at this time?

4. How can we tell that Job's life and possessions were consecrated to God? See Job 1:21.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

5. When God called upon Abraham for a deep consecration, what was his reaction (Genesis 22:2,3,9-13)? Was Abraham's consecration of Isaac complete before this trial came? Explain.

6. What types of offerings are we to give in consecration today?

7. What were the words of Saul when Jesus appeared to him on the Damascus Road (Acts 9:6)? How does his response relate to being truly successful in the Lord's service?

8. Before he came to Jesus, Saul had great hopes and ambitions: he studied the Law of Moses under Gamaliel, the foremost teacher of that day; he had ambitions of becoming a ruler of the Jews; perhaps he would one day be a member of the Jewish high court, the Sanhedrin. But he forsook all those worldly ambitions in order to follow Christ. How can we know that the Apostle Paul had made deep consecrations to God? See Philippians 3:7,8.

9. What was Jesus Christ's constant attitude toward His heavenly Father? See Matthew 26:39 and John 4:34.

5. Abraham arose early in the morning to obey what the Lord required of him. The point of the second question is to lead into a discussion about how sometimes God will test our consecrations so that we will know whether we are fully consecrated. God already knows. If we draw back in any way, then the consecration is not complete.

6. If your students have not looked specifically to the text for their answer, they may come up with such thoughts as time, money, and families. Accept these answers, then direct their attention to the text in Romans which instructs us that we are to present our bodies a living sacrifice. Being saved, we have committed our lives to Him. Christ is the One who must have the preeminence. Our lives are not to be conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of our minds.

7. "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" This question shows that from the moment Saul realized that Jesus Christ was truly the living Savior, he repented of his sins and consecrated his life, asking what the Lord would have him do. In order to be truly successful in the Lord's service, we must be willing to do whatever God requires of us.

8. He said, "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ." Ask the students: "Did Saul (later to be known as Paul) keep his consecrations?" Paul answers the question in his own words, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith" (2 Timothy 4:7).

9. "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." Involve your class in talking about how Jesus' mission on earth and whole delight was to do the Father's will. Can there be any higher goal in our lives today? This is true consecration!

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

What does the word *consecration* mean to you?

Can you think of occasions in your life when you made some consecrations?

Why do you feel it is important to make consecrations?

Name some things involved in presenting our bodies "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God."

Why is this still just "reasonable service"?

If not careful, in what ways might a Christian begin to conform to this world?

Why did King David not want to accept Araunah's offer of his threshingfloor and the animals for an offering?

In the ANSWER story, how did Patti's decision in the end remind her a little of King David's choice in this lesson?

THINGS TO DO

Bring to class an incomplete craft project; model car or plane, seed picture, painting, etc. In these the students can see the beginning of something that could have been beautiful, entertaining, useful, or of value. Left incomplete it is none of these things and will probably be left on a shelf or in a drawer, forgotten, or maybe eventually discarded. Consecrations which are not followed through will not enrich your life or anyone else's. It bothers you to even remember them, just as an incomplete project will, and the blessings and benefits you might have gained will be lost.

Bring to class some unusual kitchen gadget or a small tool from your workbench, preferably something with which the students would not likely be familiar. Ask them to guess what it is, what it is used for. Be prepared to demonstrate its use after some discussion. Then point out that there are innumerable gadgets and tools, some small, some very complicated. We can be told how to use them. We can read directions and look at illustrations but until we actually see them put to use, maybe even try

them ourselves, we can't be sure they really work. Just so, we can be told about faith, prayer, and consecration. But until we become personally involved, we will never know that they can work for us.

Take a glass pitcher of water to class. Tell your students that it represents a consecration to God. For example, a consecration to go to the mission field in a faraway country. Tell them you keep that pitcher clean and put fresh water in it daily. You want it ready if and when God needs it. God may never call you to go to a foreign country but He will know that if He does, you will be ready. That is just one consecration to God. You have surely made others that the Lord will ask you to fulfill. Are your consecrations up to date? Can God still count on you?

Answers for ANSWER

A New Picture

Put God's will and His work first and you'll have a whole new picture of your life. The words listed below are from the text. Find them in the puzzle and circle them. Choose one or two of the words from the list and use them to write about what consecration means to you. Use the lines provided below.

GOD
LAW
COST
GOOD
HOLY
LIFE
LOVE
MIND
WILL
ALTAR
GIVEN
HEART
POWER
WORLD
BODIES
LIVING
GROWTH
PERFECT
PRESENT
SERVICE
OFFERED
RENEWING
SACRIFICE
ACCEPTABLE
REASONABLE
TRANSFORMED
