

Entire Consecration a Condition of Discipleship

by Charles Finney

Forsaking all and living in a state of entire consecration to God is an indispensable condition of discipleship and the only way to truly follow Christ and live a life of obedience to Him.

Scripture: Matthew 6:24, Matthew 10:37, Luke 14:33

Topics: "Discipleship", "Total Surrender"

Description

Charles Finney emphasizes that entire consecration to God is essential for true discipleship, as outlined in Luke 14:33. He clarifies that forsaking all does not mean abandoning possessions but involves a radical heart change, recognizing God's ownership over everything we have. Finney argues that being a disciple of Christ is a prerequisite for salvation, and that true discipleship requires a complete renunciation of self-interest and a commitment to God's will. He warns against the hypocrisy of professing discipleship while living in selfishness, urging believers to live in a state of entire consecration to receive divine teaching. Ultimately, Finney calls for a sincere commitment to God, asserting that true religion begins with this act of total surrender.

Transcript

TEXT--Luke 14:33: "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."

In this discussion I design to show:

I. WHAT IS NOT IMPLIED IN FORSAKING ALL FOR CHRIST.

II. WHAT IS IMPLIED IN IT.

III. WHAT IS INTENDED BY BEING A DISCIPLE OF CHRIST.

IV. THAT BEING HIS DISCIPLE IS AN INDISPENSABLE CONDITION OF SALVATION.

V. THAT FORSAKING ALL IS AN INDISPENSABLE CONDITION OF DISCIPLESHIP.

VI. WE HAVE NO RIGHT TO PROFESS DISCIPLESHIP NOR TO ASK FOR DIVINE TEACHING, ONLY SO FAR AS WE LIVE IN A STATE OF ENTIRE CONSECRATION TO GOD.

I. What is not implied in forsaking all for Christ.

1. It does not imply the abandonment of our possessions and friends to go on a pilgrimage.
2. It does not imply that the actual parting with all our possessions is indispensable to being a disciple of Christ.
3. Nor is it a mere barter or exchange, a giving up of worldly things in exchange for eternal life. Many persons seem to have an idea, that forsaking all for Christ is merely giving up worldly things, for the sake of obtaining heavenly things. This would turn upon the mere principle of speculation, and is by no means the thing intended in the text.

II. What is implied in forsaking all for Christ.

1. A radical change of heart, from selfishness to benevolence. In other words, a forsaking, abandoning self-interest as the end of pursuit--an absolute and everlasting giving up of self-interest and self-gratification, as the end of life; and the entering into the views, sympathies, and designs of Christ, in promoting the glory of God, and the interests of his kingdom.
2. It implies the abandonment in heart and life, of the principle of self-ownership. Sinners are continually acting upon the principle of self-ownership; and practically insist upon their right to dispose of themselves as they please, without being accountable to God or man. Christ abhors this course of conduct, denies their right thus to dispose of themselves, claims them as his own, as having been at first created by Him, and afterwards redeemed by his blood. He therefore insists, that they shall cease to contend, in theory and practice, that they are their own, and have a right to dispose of themselves as they please.
3. It implies the renunciation of the claim of absolute proprietorship in any thing--that you recognize the truth, that you have nothing that you can properly call your own--that every thing is God's, and that you are his steward.
4. It implies the hearty and practical recognition of universal stewardship--that every thing you have and are--your being--life, health, body, soul, time, possessions, friends, all, are to be regarded and treated by you as in the highest possible sense belonging to God; and that for every thing, you are to give Him, as his steward, a strict and impartial account.
5. It implies that you as really feel, that all your possessions are God's, and that you have no right to dispose of them, only by his order, as you would feel in regard to a farm, a house, or any piece of property which you had sold, and of which you had given title deeds, and only remained in possession as a tenant at will. Suppose you had sold your farm or your house; title deeds had been executed, delivered, and recorded, and you were only allowed to retain them, till the owner comes or sends some one to take possession. In such a case, you understand very well in what light you would regard his property. If you are an honest man, you would not think of selling it, or making any disposition of it whatever, except to husband it to the best advantage for the owner--that whenever he should appear or send to take possession, you would have no thought of demurring to his right to take possession. You would feel all the time, "This is not mine." This would have a practical bearing upon all your conduct. You would expect of course, at any time, to deliver possession at the call of the owner, without gainsaying or resistance.
6. It implies a course of conduct in all respects corresponding to the state of mind of which I have just spoken. It is a state of mind in which you would no more think of disposing of the things in your possession

without consulting God, and being satisfied in respect to his will upon the subject, than you would think of going and disposing of your neighbor's goods without consulting him. The man who forsakes all, in the sense of the text, feels, that with respect to his fellow men, his possessions are his own in reference to them; but in reference to God, his conscious and practical feeling is, that these things are no more his--that he has no more right to dispose of them, but at the bidding of God, than he has to dispose of his neighbor's things.

7. It implies the doing of all this from love to God, and not, as I have said, upon the principle of barter and exchange. It is to be done upon the same principle upon which an affectionate wife would forsake all that she has, and go into banishment with her husband, from affection to him, and not because she expected a reward.

8. It implies the joyful, and not constrained doing of this. It is to be considered, not as the least of two evils, but as that which is right in itself, just, useful, and to be chosen and loved for its own sake. It really is strictly just, for as a matter of fact you are not your own, and are mere tenants at will, with respect to all your possessions. It is therefore, really a matter of strict justice--that you should forsake all that you have, in the sense explained. It should be done by you, because it is just and right, and from a love to right--not from fear of punishment if you do not do it.

9. It implies entire consecration to God of yourself and all that you have and are; and nothing short of this is implied in forsaking all for Christ.

III. What is intended by being a disciple of Christ.

1. A disciple is a pupil. Therefore, to be a disciple of Christ is to be his pupil, and have Him for a teacher.
2. To be a disciple of Christ, is to be a Christian--a follower of Christ--one devoted to his interest--one who embraces his principles, believes his doctrine, and follows his example.

IV. Being Christ's disciple, or divine teaching, is an express and indispensable condition of salvation.

1. The doctrine of the indispensable necessity of the teachings of the Holy Spirit, to the salvation of the soul, is abundantly taught in the Bible--so abundantly, that I need not take up your time in quoting proof texts.

2. It is also evident from the nature of the case. Words are only signs of ideas. They possess us of no ideas, where we have no experience. They are a mere foreign language, unless we have the idea in our mind which they are designed to represent, or unless we have some experience that shall enable us to understand the meaning of the words used.

3. Words expressive of spiritual truth are figurative, as a thing of course; and but for the influence of the Holy Spirit, we should not get hold of the real meaning of words any farther than our natural experience of things would place us in circumstances to understand it. A selfish mind may and does understand enough to convict and condemn it, and enough to enable the mind, were it disposed, to render an acceptable obedience to God. But as the unregenerate man is wholly indisposed to obey God, as a matter of fact, he does not and will not understand enough of divine truth to induce him to change his heart, without the teachings of the Holy Spirit. Hence, the necessity of being taught by Christ.

V. Forsaking all is an indispensable condition of discipleship.

1. The text--"Whosoever he be of you, that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."

2. The nature of the case:

(1.) Nothing short of this is conversion, or regeneration. Regeneration consists in renouncing selfishness, and becoming supremely benevolent. It consists in a change of heart.

(2.) Nothing short of this is virtue; because, nothing short of this is right. A man has not done right until he has done all that justice requires. Justice requires entire renunciation of self-interest, as the great end of life, and a cordial and universal consecration of self and all that we have to God. Until a man has done this, he has in no sense done right. Till he has done this, he is a dishonest man; a defrauder and robber of God; and there is not and cannot be a particle of virtue in him.

(3.) It is naturally indispensable to salvation. The prime idea of salvation is holiness. A man can neither be holy nor happy, without forsaking all he has, in the sense in which I have explained it. Without this, he can be at peace neither with God nor with himself. It is just what God demands, what his own conscience demands, and what the universe demands of him. Until he does this, it is impossible that he should have peace.

3. It is indispensable to divine teaching:

(1.) Because the renunciation of selfishness, as the rule of life, and a state of entire consecration to his service, are naturally indispensable to a right understanding of his views, sentiments, and instructions.

(2.) There must be a similarity of views, feelings, and experience, between two persons, or they cannot fairly understand each other. Now if you are selfish, and He supremely benevolent, there is of necessity such an exact contrariety in your views, feelings, and states of mind, as to render it next to impossible for you to understand Him. All your habits of thinking and reasoning, all your understanding of language, is in accordance with the supremely selfish state of your heart. How, then, will you understand the language of one whose state of mind is in all respects the exact opposite of your own? How remarkable it is, that as soon as a person becomes thoroughly converted, the Bible, which had before been to him a dead letter, becomes at once so plain and simple, that that which was before read without any interest or understanding, appears all new, plain, glorious; and the mind is filled with wonder, that the Bible has never appeared so before. This is the natural result of being in a state of mind similar to that of the writers of the Bible. When persons speak to us in our own language, and upon a subject in which we strongly sympathize with them, we understand them with the utmost ease. But if in the opposite state of mind, we almost invariably misunderstand them.

(3.) Without this state of mind, Christ cannot teach you; because you will not study. It is in vain for any one to attempt to teach another, if he will not yield up his mind to the investigation and consideration of the subject. Therefore, except you forsake your selfishness, become truly benevolent, and engage heart and soul with Christ, in building up his kingdom, you will have no such interest in the end as to give up your mind to the study and understanding of the means by which the end is to be obtained.

(4.) Unless you forsake all that you have, Christ cannot teach you, because you will not be candid. What he says will not be received by you with honesty, candor and a disposition to know and do the truth.

(5.) Nor will you be diligent, without this state of mind, in searching out his meaning.

(6.) Nor will you understand the doctrines of self-denial which He teaches. Without a self-denying state of mind, without that state of mind which forsakes all that we have, and abandons selfishness in every form and degree, we shall not of course understand the doctrines of self-denial as taught by Christ.

(7.) Without this state of mind, you will resist, when he rebukes your prejudices, selfishness and lust.

(8.) The doctrines of the cross cannot be received without the spirit of cross-bearing. Hence cross-bearing is forever indispensable to discipleship.

VI. We have no right to profess discipleship, nor to ask for divine teaching, only so far as we live in a state of entire consecration to God.

1. Because this is the express condition of discipleship.

2. Because the Bible invariably represents the beginning of true religion as an act of entire consecration. It is, in the Bible, spoken of as a radical change of moral character, as a change of heart, as a new birth.

3. The nature of the case shows that nothing short of this can be either virtue or obedience to God.

4. It is tempting God to profess discipleship without possessing that state of mind which is the expressed and indispensable condition of discipleship.

5. It is tempting God to ask for divine teaching, or to ask Christ to be our teacher, unless we fulfill the condition upon the fulfillment of which alone, we can become his disciples. Certainly He has a right to impose such conditions upon us. Nay, He is bound to do so. Both justice and the nature of the case render such a condition indispensable. And is it not insulting Him to ask for divine teaching, to profess to be his disciples, while as a matter of fact, we do not fulfill the expressed condition of discipleship? Have we a right to retain our selfishness--to live in any form of sin--to reject the condition--and yet claim to be his disciples, and come to Him for instruction, as if we fulfilled the condition? Surely we have no such right, and every such expectation is vain.

6. All professions of discipleship without the spirit of entire consecration, are regarded by Christ as highly abominable and dishonorable to Him. To all such persons He says, "I would that thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."

REMARKS.

1. Entire consecration and entire sanctification are the same thing. I have been amazed many times of late to hear persons contending for the doctrine of entire consecration to God in this life, who pretend to reject the doctrine of entire sanctification, as if they were different things. Now the very meaning of the term Sanctification is consecration. This is the meaning of the term as used both in the Old and New Testaments. It is really astonishing to see how much play there can be upon a word among professedly good men. They dare not deny the doctrine of entire consecration to God in this life, but having committed themselves against the doctrine of entire sanctification, they try to preserve their consistency in holding to the one and rejecting the other, thus assuming what is certainly contrary to fact, that they are different things.

It is not a little curious that some writers in the religious periodicals of the day, are opposing the doctrine of entire sanctification, while they profess that all ought to preach the doctrine of entire consecration, not only

as a thing attainable, but as something which we are to expect to attain in this life. I say again, to sanctify is to set apart; to consecrate to the service of God. Consecration and sanctification to God are words of precisely similar import.

2. So far is entire sanctification from being unattainable or a rare attainment with real Christians in this life, that it is the very beginning of true religion in all the saints. It is the very first act of obedience. This has been substantially insisted upon by all the leading orthodox writers for ages. Pres. Edwards says upon this subject, in his treatise upon the "Religious Affections," vol. 5 of his Works, pp. 264-5:

"And this point may be farther illustrated and confirmed, if it be considered, that the holy scriptures abundantly place sincerity and soundness in religion, in making a full choice of God as our only Lord and portion, forsaking all for Him, and in a full determination of the will for God and Christ, on counting the cost; in our hearts closing and complying with the religion of Jesus Christ, with all that belongs to it, embracing it with all its difficulties, as it were hating our dearest earthly enjoyments, and even our own lives, for Christ; giving up ourselves with all that we have, wholly and for ever unto Christ, without keeping back any thing or making any reserve. In one word, sincerity consists in the great duty of self-denial for Christ; or in denying, that is, as it were disowning and renouncing ourselves for Him, making ourselves nothing that He may be all. Mat. 5:29, 30: 'If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.' Mat. 6:24: 'No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.' Mat. 10:37-39: 'He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it.' Mat. 13:44-46. Luke 14:16-20, 25-33, and 16:13. Rom. 6:3-8. Gal 2:20, and 6:14. Phil. 3:7-10. 1 John 2:15. Rev. 14:4. Gen. 12:1-4, with Heb. 11:8-10. Gen. 22:12, and Heb. 11:17, 24-27. Deut. 13:6, and 33:9. Now surely having a heart to forsake all for Christ, tends to actually forsaking all for Him, so far as there is occasion, and we have the trial. Having a heart to deny ourselves for Christ, tends to denying ourselves in deed, when Christ and self-interest stand in competition. A giving up of ourselves, with all that we have, in our hearts, without making any reserve there, tends to our behaving ourselves universally as his, as subject to his will, and devoted to his ends. Our hearts entirely closing with the religion of Jesus, with all that belongs to it, and as attended with all its difficulties, upon a deliberate counting of the cost, tends to a universal closing with the same in act and deed, and actually going through all the difficulties we meet with in the way of religion, and so holding out with patience and perseverance."

Now here President Edwards expressly maintains all that is asserted in this discourse in respect to the real meaning of this text, and fully confirms the idea that entire consecration in the sense here explained is implied in "sincerity" in religion, and that it is indispensable to the existence of true religion in the soul. Indeed, he here fully asserts all that any of us at Oberlin have ever pretended to teach on the subject of entire sanctification; for observe, that he teaches in this paragraph, where he is discoursing particularly upon the nature or attributes of true religion, not only entire, but also continued sanctification. This Pres. Edwards says is indispensable to "sincerity or soundness in religion at all." And let me ask, suppose any person to be just what Pres. Edwards here asserts to belong to and implied in the very existence of religion in the soul, what more does God require of him? Just read over the paragraph again, and see if

the orthodox Pres. Edwards does not teach the very doctrine, in all its length and breadth, for which we have contended. He is not speaking of some rare attainment in religion, but of that which is indispensable to the very beginning of religion, as that without which there is no "sincerity or soundness in religion."

President Edwards, then, with all his fears of the doctrine of Christian Perfection, when describing true religion, asserts and maintains the very sentiment for which we contend, only changing the phraseology, but manifestly meaning the same thing.

3. What a deplorable state of things is that when the church and its ministers, many of them, seriously call in question the practical attainability, in this life, of that which constitutes the very beginning of true religion.

4. Nor is the fact that religion consists in entire consecration, at all inconsistent with growth in grace. To grow in grace is to grow in favor with God, for this is the meaning of the language. A child may consecrate all its little powers to God, and yet continue to grow in grace, that is, in the favor of God. This is asserted to have been actually the case with the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. The word rendered 'in favor,' in the case of Christ, being that which is elsewhere rendered grace. As knowledge extends, holiness will ever extend; and thus the saints will grow in grace to all eternity.

5. You can see why Christ found fault with the members of one of the churches for having left its "first love." Their first love was right. It was entire consecration. And He regarded their having left their first love as an act of apostacy, for which He threatened them with destruction.

6. As regeneration consists in entire sanctification, or consecration to God, the only question that can reasonably be agitated is in respect to its permanency--whether, as a matter of fact, we may expect to continue in our first love--whether we may expect to abide in a state of entire consecration, or whether backsliding is a thing to be expected of course?

7. Who, after all, can really doubt that, by the grace of God, a convert may avoid backsliding? Who can really doubt, if he be properly instructed, that he may continue to grow in grace, as he grows in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, until he becomes rooted and grounded in love?

8. But this would be a state of permanent or continued sanctification. To my mind it is really shocking, that the Church should be alarmed when it is taught that persons are to expect to attain a state of entire sanctification in this life. It is certainly a monstrous error, to maintain that any thing short of entire consecration to God is regeneration. If any thing short of this is admitted by the teachers of religion to be true religion, it will inevitably lead the Church into a fatal error. And here I could inquire of my brethren upon my knees in agony, whether it is not true that the preaching of the present day often makes the impression that entire consecration to God is a rare attainment--something to be aimed at indeed--but seldom if ever reached in this life--that the best services of the saints, and the best states of mind in which they are, are mingled with much that is wrong--and that they hourly, nay, continually offend and even sin in their most holy performances. Now how infinitely dangerous is such teaching as this. How many thousands of souls have gone to hell, because they have been led to believe they could be truly religious and yet be conscious of sin all the time. They have been convicted, felt condemned, and conscious indeed that their best performances were sinful. But they have been taught that this is the case with all true saints, and that a consciousness of present sin is not at all inconsistent with their being saints. Nay, that the more deeply conscious they are, of sinning daily, in word, thought and deed, the greater is the evidence of their humility, knowledge of their own hearts, and of the soundness of their piety. Now I humbly ask is this the standard God has set up? Does this look like complying with the conditions of this and many similar texts?

Is this daily living in sin consistent with being a disciple of Christ? I beseech you, my brethren, look to this, and see whether the blood of deceived professors is not to be found in your skirts. Why, some of you talk about the dangerous tendency of preaching the doctrine of entire sanctification in this life. What can it mean, my brethren, that you do not perceive the dangerous tendency of preaching the opposite doctrine--the absolutely ruinous tendency of admitting, for one moment, that any thing less than a state of entire consecration, is at all acceptable to God, or at all consistent with the existence of true religion. Here I wish to be understood. I do not mean to be understood, that a person's occasionally falling into sin, is entirely inconsistent with his ever having been converted, or with his being a true Christian. But I do mean, and I solemnly believe, that Christ meant to teach, that nothing is acceptable to God, short of entire obedience; and that every act which is really acceptable to God implies entire consecration to God. I have so recently addressed you upon this subject, that I need not enlarge upon these thoughts.

9. Continuance in your first love, or in a state of entire consecration, or sanctification to God, is indispensable to the enjoyment of divine teaching. Remember, I beseech you, that this is the express condition, upon which alone you are to expect the teachings of Christ. Unless, therefore, you continue in this state, daily and hourly fulfill this condition, you have no right to come to Christ, expecting to be taught of Him. If you do expect it, you will not receive it. If you pray for the teachings of the Holy Spirit, you will not receive his influences, unless you live up to his divine instructions, obey all the light you have, and thus live in a state of entire consecration.

10. You see why so few persons really enjoy the continual teachings of the Holy Spirit--why they so often pray for the Spirit to teach them, and are not taught by Him. Why is it, that you, my brethren, so often ask for the Holy Spirit, and pray for divine guidance and teaching, and do not receive what you ask? I can answer for you. It is because you do not fulfill the condition, upon which alone you are to receive his influences. You are indulging some form of selfishness. You do not literally forsake all that you have. If you did, you might approach Christ, at any time, with the assurance that He will teach you. But as it is, He says to you, "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things I say?" "Why do you claim me as your teacher, and come to me for instruction, when you do not comply with the expressed conditions, upon which alone I have promised to teach you?"

11. You see that whenever you go to pray for divine teaching, that this question must be distinctly before you, whether you so live in the fulfillment of the condition, that you have a right to ask for his instruction? Many persons live in selfishness. They are as conscious, that they do not live in a state of entire consecration, as they are that they live at all. And yet they continue to pray for divine teaching, as if they fulfilled the condition. Sometimes they deceive themselves, by thinking they are taught of Christ, when they are only amusing themselves with their own delusions, or following the suggestions of Satan. At other times they so often pray for divine teaching, with a consciousness that they do not receive it, as to become discouraged, and feel as if praying was of but very little use. They really doubt, whether the promises of Christ mean what they say. In all this they overlook the fact, that there is an express condition to these promises, although not in all cases immediately connected with them. Yet, in our text, and in multitudes of similar passages, it is expressed in the plainest language; with which they do not comply.

12. You see why the Bible is so little understood, even by the Church of God. While the church is in such a state as to doubt whether, as a matter of fact they are expected to live one single day without sin, it is no wonder they do not enjoy divine teaching. How can they understand the Bible without the Spirit of God? And how can they have the Holy Ghost without being in a state of entire consecration, or in other words, without living in all respects up to the best light they have? When you obey one truth, Christ will teach you

another. And of what use is it for Him to continue to teach, while you refuse to obey?

13. You can see why so few persons make a thorough proficiency in Theological study. If young men in the study of Theology, or ministers of any age, neglect to fulfill the conditions, and live in a state of entire consecration to God, they will not, and cannot of course enjoy divine teaching, and of course, will make very little proficiency in Theological study.

14. You can see why ministers are so often at a loss to know what to preach; seem to be so dull and dark, and feel it so difficult to prepare for the pulpit. If they lived in a state of entire consecration, their feelings would be the very reverse of all this. They would enjoy the continual teaching of Christ. They would continually feed the Church with knowledge and understanding. And out of their belly, as Christ has said, would flow rivers of living water.

15. You can see from this subject, what great injustice a minister does to Christ, and to the Church to which he ministers, if he does not live in a state of entire consecration to God. Why, suppose a Church employ a minister, and instead of his living in such a manner as to enjoy divine teaching, he indulges selfishness, appetite and lust, and thus deprives himself of the teaching of Christ. How infinitely does it endanger souls! How greatly does it dishonor God!

16. How much of the praying for the influence of the Holy Spirit is really mocking and tempting God. See that band of selfish professors of religion. They are assembled for a prayer meeting. Every one of them perhaps, is as conscious that he does not live up to the best light he has, that he does not forsake all that he has and live in a state of entire consecration to God, as he is of his own existence. Now what are they assembled for? Why, to pray for divine teaching, for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon them and upon others. Indeed. And is not this tempting God? You ought to remember the word of the Lord in Ezek. 14:3: "Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumbling-block of their iniquity before their face: should I be inquired of at all by them?" Now see these same professors daily around the family altar, praying for divine teaching, without so much as seriously intending to live for a single day in a state of entire consecration to God. Why do they make such prayers? Why do they indulge the expectation of mercy, the influence of Christ's Spirit to instruct them? I answer, because they are not themselves thoroughly and continually taught, that a state of entire consecration is the indispensable condition of being a disciple of Christ. Why, instead of this, the impression is made upon them, that a state of entire consecration is the rarest attainment in the world. And thus they live on, dragging their way down to death and hell, afraid of the doctrine of entire consecration to God in this life--and well, with their views, they may be, for surely it is something entirely inconsistent with their experience. And when shall they ever have a different experience, unless the teachers of religion thoroughly awake to a state of entire consecration themselves, and to the duty of insisting universally upon entire consecration as the indispensable condition of discipleship?

17. Now, beloved, is it not one of the most astonishing things in the world, that with this and so many similar texts upon this subject in the hands of the Church, a state of entire consecration should be so little insisted upon, as indispensable to any degree of true religion?

18. Forsaking all that you have, deadness to selfishness, and to other lovers, is indispensable to the enjoyment of God and of Christ. A wife enjoys the society of her husband just in proportion as her heart is swallowed up in him. His presence is no satisfaction to her if she does not love him. If she have other lovers, the presence of her husband is but an annoyance to her. Just so with you. Unless you are

supremely devoted to Christ, his presence would be but an annoyance to you.

19. You see why He so often cuts off every dependence on an idol. He is jealous over you with a godly jealousy. If He sees you going after idols and other lovers, He will often interfere and remove them out of the way.

20. The doctrine of entire consecration or entire sanctification in this life is no new doctrine. It is as old as the Bible, and as old as true religion. And as I said before, the only question respects the continuance and permanency of this state in this life, and not at all whether a state of entire consecration is attained in the present life.

21. Sinners can see what they have to do to become Christians. You must renounce your selfishness and become supremely and disinterestedly benevolent. You must change your heart, forsake all that you have and consecrate your all to Christ.

22. To refuse or neglect to do this is to continue in a state of high-handed injustice and rebellion against God. It is refusing to render to God that which belongs to Him. It is to refuse to become an honest man, to do what is right because it is right. Until you do this, God cannot and ought not to forgive you.

23. And let me remind you all once more, that when you go to God in prayer, if you would be heard, you must go with the consciousness that you fulfill the condition; and remember, that if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep his commandments and do those things that are pleasing in his sight." I Jn. 3:20-22. Now, therefore, I beseech you, remember to fulfill the condition, that you may enjoy the teaching of Christ. Except you be his disciple, you cannot be saved. And you cannot be his disciple, only as you "forsake all that you have."

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