

A Return to Functional First Century Christianity - Part 2

by Peter Brandon

The sermon emphasizes the importance of yielding to God and living a life of holiness as a reflection of first century Christianity.

Duration: 27:39

Topics: "Yielding to God", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

Peter Brandon emphasizes the need for a return to functional first-century Christianity through a deep understanding of Romans 6, 7, and 8. He explains that believers are called to yield themselves to God, recognizing their new identity in Christ, which involves a daily commitment to righteousness and holiness. Brandon highlights the importance of being dead to sin and alive to God, urging Christians to examine their lives and fully dedicate their members as instruments of righteousness. He stresses that true yielding leads to spiritual growth and the manifestation of Christ's beauty in our lives, contrasting it with the emptiness of a life devoted to sin. Ultimately, he calls for a revival of genuine faith and commitment within the church.

Transcript

As most of you know, we are taking up a study in Romans 6, 7 and 8. The subject being a return to functional 1st century Christianity. But we begin reading from verse 13, Romans 6, verse 13. We did notice that the chapter was divided into two.

The first part had to do with the subject of being dead to sin. And we noticed that baptism symbolized it. Verses 3, 4 and 5. The cross proves it.

6, 7 and 8. The resurrection confirms it. 9 and 10 and 11. Faith appropriates it.

Likewise reckon ye all yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God. Now we are going to move from verse 13 right down to the end. And the key verse is in verse 15.

What then shall we sin? Because we are not under the law, but under grace. God forbid, know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey. And therefore the second reason why we shouldn't sin is because we should be yielded to God.

Now shall we read from verse 13. Neither yield ye your members as instruments or weapons 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. For sin shall not have dominion over you. For ye are not under the law, but under grace.

I will not be able to expound verse 14. But that simply means that the law was never given to the Christ family. It was only given to the Adamic family.

And when you were released from the Adamic family through the death of Christ. You were not under law, but you are under grace. Therefore in the old family, for the Jew at least.

The motto was for me to live is the law. But for those in the Christ family it's for me to live is Christ. And to die is gain.

Now we shall see as we go on with our study. It doesn't mean that we violate the law. But we keep it under a new principle and a new power.

What then shall we sin? Because we are not under the law, but under grace God forbid. Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey. His servants ye are to whom ye obey.

Whether of sin unto death or of obedience unto righteousness. But God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin. That ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

Being then made free from sin. Ye became the servants of righteousness. I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh.

For as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness. And to iniquity unto iniquity. Even so now yield your members servants to righteousness and holiness.

For when we were the servants of sin. Ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed.

For the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin. And become servants to God.

Ye have your fruit unto holiness. And the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death.

But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Now I'm going to give you all my headings. So that I can go through the narrative very quickly.

And I do not want to keep you too long. Because I know you've already had one service. In verse 13 we see the nature of yielding.

In verse 16 we see the responsibility of a Christian to be yielded. In verse 17 we see the principle and the privilege of yielding. In verse 19 and 20 we see the extent of yielding.

And from 21 to the end we see the fruit of yielding. Now may I say this as clearly as I can. Any local church that's yielded to the Lord will be blessed.

I have noticed in my travels after being 46 years in the Lord's work. Wherever I have seen a group of people totally yielded to God. Irrespective of their denominations.

As long as they hold the fundamentals. God blesses them. And wherever you find a group of people who are not yielded to God.

You may see a large company. But eventually after time it all blows up. Now what we want to see is not only growth numerically.

But we want to see growth spiritually. So this is a vital chapter for us to grip. Now when you look at verse 13.

First of all you will notice that yielding means examination. For that's what the word yield means. It comes from a brilliant Greek word.

Which basically means to stand on parade. When I was in the Navy. I had to put off my civilian clothing.

And told never to wear it again. And then I had to put on a naval uniform at Collingwood. And the top part was like a ladies costume.

It was so tight. The bottom part as you know with the old naval uniform. Was like a ladies skirt.

And every morning while I was in training. I had to go on parade for examination. And the Commodore came along.

And what he wanted to see was. That I had put off once and for ever the civilian uniform. And I had put on the naval uniform.

And although he was pickled with rum. And sometimes he was staggering. He would almost put his nose.

On the little bow that we had to tie. To see that we were wearing the uniform correctly. Now that is the meaning of the word.

Now says the apostle. Every Christian should go on parade every morning. And he should put off the old clothing.

That relates to the old unconverted life. He should put on Christ once and for all. He should reckon himself dead to sin.

And alive unto God. Now my beloved friends. If that grips us today.

We shall get a real blessing. For that is the secret of consecration. It's a daily putting off.

It's a daily putting off. Secondly it means manifestation. Notice what it says.

That yield yourselves unto God. As those that are alive from the dead. And your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

Now before we look at the details of manifestation. Let's go into the point of consecration. Where to yield ourselves to God.

And our members as instruments of righteousness. Now what does that mean? Sometimes I have discovered. That there is a fourth motive for consecration.

We are having a mission. And I have heard brethren say. Lord for the sake of blessing.

We are going to yield ourselves to God. Or I have heard a young man saying. Who wanted to get a good wife.

Lord I am yielding myself to the Lord. So that I might meet a godly partner. Now my dear friends.

It's a wonderful thing to yield yourself to God. But that's the wrong motive. We should yield ourselves to God.

For God's sake. Whether we get blessing or not. We should yield ourselves up to God.

Because of all that he has done for us. At the cross. Then we must yield our members.

Now what does this mean? I take my mind. And I tell it. It no longer belongs to Adam.

It belongs to Christ. And therefore it's a renewed mind. I'm going to yield it up to God.

For the Lord Jesus to think for us. That's beautiful. Then I take up my eyes.

And I make a covenant with them. Please do that today. Make a covenant with your eyes.

I yield them up to God. I tell the Lord that their living eyes. They belong to the Lord Jesus.

I want him to see through them. Then I take up my lips. And I yield my lips to the Lord Jesus.

And I tell him that their living lips. They're no longer associated with Adam. They're associated with Christ.

And I yield them up to him. And then I take my ears. Now you may not have a gossiping tongue.

But sometimes you know. We can be naughty. And we can have gossiping ears.

Now when you become a Christian. You yield your ears up to the Lord. As living ears.

For they belong to him. And you ask the Lord to listen through your hearing. Then you take your hands and your feet.

And you yield them up to the Lord. And you take your heart and your will. And you yield that up to the Lord.

So that every single member of your body is consecrated. Now I know what you're thinking. That's very extreme brother Peter.

But that's what the Lord expects of us. To be yielded. Now what is the purpose of yielding? That functional righteousness and holiness.

Might be seen in us. And you say what is that? Well to put it very simply. It means that in your personality.

Year by year. The beauty and the loveliness of the Lord. One of the loveliest things that you will ever see.

Before you go to heaven. Is to see a group of people. Filled with the Spirit.

And filled with the loveliness of Christ. Forgive me saying this. I remember seeing Mr. St. John and Mr. Vine.

And we were with them for three weeks. Giving a series of readings. And when those two men were expanding the scriptures.

They were filled with the beauty of Christ. What they were expanding. They were experiencing.

Now that's what the Lord wants. And that's the basis of consecration. Now come with me down to verse 16.

Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey. His servants ye are to whom ye obey. Whether of sin unto death or obedience unto righteousness.

That shows us our responsibility. You will notice that the children that belong to Adam. Are completely yielded to sin.

And just as they are completely yielded to sin. We who are Christians. Should be yielded to our new master.

The Lord Jesus. And therefore you will note that the word servant. In this scripture.

Comes from the Greek word Joulos. And that means slave. And therefore every time you read the word servant.

In this chapter. It should always be slave. Therefore there is no neutrality.

And what the apostle is saying there is this. You are either enslaved to sin. Or enslaved to the Lord Jesus.

Now could I say this to my young brothers and sisters. And I must say it with a sense of shame. When I was 16.

And 17 and a half. I had one foot in the world. And one foot in the church.

And I was an absolute misery. I say this with a sense of shame. My idol was the Arsenal.

Love them. And then it was a Sunday afternoon. Our Bible class teacher.

Mr. King. Challenged us about consecration. And 24 young men went to their respective homes.

Went to their respective bedroom. And for the first time they called Jesus. Sovereign Lord.

And at that moment. My Christian life was revolutionized. Wouldn't it be lovely if all of us.

Said goodbye to the Adamic world. And gave ourselves completely to the Lord Jesus. That would be the beginning of rebuttal.

Now let's look at the privilege of yielding. 17 and 18. But God be thanked that we were the slaves of sin.

But Jehovah obeyed from the heart. That form of doctrine which was delivered to us. Do you know if you went to hear Paul preached.

I think you would all have a shock. You see he not only preached the fire insurance gospel. Saved from hell.

And thank God from that. He preached this experimental gospel. That we can be delivered from the power of sin.

And you see it's not the normal Christian life. That we should go on sinning. The normal Christian life.

Is that we should be living victoriously. Therefore when he preached the gospel. He reminds them of the doctrine which was delivered them.

And the doctrine was being made free from sin. He became the servant of righteousness. Now I want to do something that's very unorthodox.

I want to imagine that we're all unconverted. I want to imagine that we're all belonging to Adam. I want to imagine that we have no time for grace.

Now what would be happening? We would be completely enslaved to selfishness. We would be enslaved to our habits. We would be enslaved to pleasure.

And we would serve it 100%. But I tell you what. Our life would not be so healthy.

Some of us would be alcoholic. Some of us would be on drugs. Some of us would have broken families.

Some of our children would be in a state of confusion. Like a boy said to me today. I don't know where my mum is.

I don't know where my dad is. And we would be in an awful mess. But hallelujah we're saved.

And we're happier. And we're healthier. No.

I've been running all my life. Ever since I was 18. When I was 26 I nearly did the 4 minute mile with old Bannister.

But I can't run now because I've got the old man's disease. But that doesn't make any difference. You see we're healthier.

And we're happier being Christians. That's why all of us should be completely devoted to the Lord. I've never seen a consecrated life that the Lord spoiled.

Not one. I've seen many lives that have been smashed up. I said.

Now says the apostle. That's our privilege. Now look at the extent of consecration.

I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh. In other words he's saying. I'm using an illustration because you are limited in your understanding.

And thank God that he did. For as ye have yielded your members, servants, slaves to uncleanness and to iniquity and to iniquity. Even so now yield your members slaves to righteousness and to holiness.

For when ye were the servants of sin ye were free from righteousness. Now what does this mean? I've often gone into a public house. You say.

What do you mean brother Peter? On Friday night in the old country when I'm having a mission. I do a pub crawl. With three elders.

And I take them in public houses and I preach. And then would you believe it. I do a disco crawl.

At eleven o'clock at night I stand in the midst of a dance floor and give them the word for five minutes. Then I do a bingo crawl. All on a Friday night.

And I give them lovely scriptural numbers. Three twenty three all of sin. Six twenty three the wages of sin is death.

Five eight Romans God commends his love toward us. And we are seeing blessings. But I've often said this.

After I have come out of a British pub I have said Lord. If you had twenty Christians devoted to the Lord Jesus. As these people are devoted to drink.

We would shake the world. They go in Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday. And even Sunday now.

They go in at seven. And the publican turns them out at half past ten. And they never grumble.

I've often preached at a football match half time. And I've said this especially in Liverpool City. Lord if you had twenty or thirty Christians devoted to the Lord Jesus.

Like these thirty thousand Liverpool City supporters. We would shake the place. And then I've wept and I've said this.

Lord the world is more devoted to their pleasures. Than what we are to the Lord Jesus. That's what the apostles say.

What you did in your unconverted days. He says you were given over to uncleanness. And you went from one degree of iniquity to another.

You were never static in your devotion to sin. Now he says do the same thing for the Lord. Can you see the point? Then he finishes by the fruit of consecration and yielding.

What fruit then had you then in those things whereof you are now ashamed. For the end of those things is death. When you were in your unconverted days.

You went into the Roman temples. And you saw immorality in your pagan feasts. And you joined in.

Why you're ashamed of it now. In your unconverted days you had lesbian manifestations. And homosexual manifestations.

And now you've given it all up. You're ashamed of those things now. In your unconverted days you gave yourself to drink.

And some of you were paralytically drunk. And you look back. And you're ashamed of it now.

And after all it was bringing you into eternal damnation. But now he says. But now being made free from sin.

And become the servants of God. You have your fruit unto holiness. And the end everlasting life.

Do you know what that means? The main principle of your life now is holiness. And that means the formation of the beauty of Christ in your life. And then when you have to do your dying.

You have eternal life with the Lord. And what does that eventually mean? When he builds the new heaven and the new earth. Wherein dwells righteousness.

You will have a glorified body. And you will enjoy that sphere of heaven forever. What fruit? Then he closes by an alternative.

The wages of sin is death. That's being in Adam. But the gift of God is eternal life.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. And when eternal life is manifested. The glory of Christ is seen.

I went into a nightclub and I shall never forget this. I'm a little reluctant to tell you this. I took one or two elders with me.

And one elder had to leave. And I went in at half past eleven at night. And when I got in there would be four hundred business men with their wives.

And I didn't see anything pornographic or lurid. Then they asked me to speak. And I spoke for fifteen minutes.

And they gave me a wonderful hearing. Then the manager said to me perhaps you would like to go and sit at the table. And I discovered that these men were some of the richest men in Britain.

And I spoke to them about their souls needs. I must say some of the most affluent and delicious meals I've ever seen were served in that nightclub. Then I noticed a friend by the name of Baldwin that came in with me from Bolton.

Was heavily engaged with a man speaking. And then he called me over. And I'm going to relate to you what he told me.

He was one of the richest men in Britain. I won't mention his name. And he had two or three vast businesses.

And he said Mr. Brandon I know that money cannot satisfy me. Everything that materialism can give me I think I have. There's a great empty hole in my life.

But he says I have been around some evangelical churches. And this is what I've discovered. You people sing about peace.

You preach about peace. You pray about peace. But you haven't got it.

And then he gave me some facts. He says you sing about joy. You talk about joy.

You pray about joy. But you haven't got it. And then he said this.

You sing about love. You talk about love. You preach about love.

But the divisions are money. And then we try to answer his question. And then he said this.

I am genuinely seeking the Lord but I've been disappointed. He says look. We love money.

That's why we're here. Some of the greatest business deals in Britain, and this is when business was booming, are being dealt with tonight. And we come in here every Saturday night from 10 o'clock and we go out half past five discussing business.

Is there one church in Bolton where they're so devoted to their Lord that they are spending a night in prayer praying for our soul? He says is there? Two of us were silent. Our heads were down. And we had to say no.

We gave him a reason why and said please read it and left him. None of us could speak going back in the car. And when I came into Mr. Baldwin's home he put a couple of horlicks before us.

And for the first time I saw a hard northerner break down and weep. And do you know what he said? Peter, we desperately need revival. Wouldn't it be lovely if it came to regress? Come and hear these talks on how to recapture first century Christianity.

That we might see real revival breaking out. That we might be a consecrated church.

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