

Giving the Lord Jesus what He Desires: Ourselves -- So He May More Fully Enjoy us!

My Son, give me your heart ... Prov 23:26

Introduction

- A. All of Christianity revolves around a Person: The Lord Jesus Christ.
- B. Through His death for us we were brought into a living relationship with Him.
- C. There is nothing, absolutely nothing, more important than responding to Him.
- D. What does He want? He simply wants you, your love, your trust, your fellowship, your worship, and your intimate involvement with Him, **so He may enjoy you and you may enjoy Him.** Consider the following references.

*"But as for you, the Lord took you and brought you out of the iron-smelting furnace, out of Egypt, to be **the people of his inheritance** as you now are." Deut 4:20*

*"For the Lord **takes delight in his people**; he crowns the humble with salvation. Let the saints rejoice in this honor and sing for joy upon their beds." Psalm 149:4,5*

*"At that time Jesus, **full of joy through the Holy Spirit**, said, 'I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, **for this was your good pleasure.**'" Luke 10:21*

*"And when he finds it (the lost sheep) he **joyfully** puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, '**Rejoice with me, I have found my lost sheep.**'" Luke 15:5,6*

*"I have told you this so that **my joy** may be in you and that your joy may be complete." John 15:11*

*"For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and **joy in the Holy Spirit.**" Romans 14:17*

*"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, **joy**, peace" Galatians 5:22*

*"For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, **in accordance with his pleasure** and will -- to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the one he loves." Ephesians 1:4-6*

*" I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, **the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints**, and his incomparably great power for us who believe" Ephesians 1:18,19*

- E. Why is such a relationship (in practice) so fraught with hindrance and turmoil?
1. If He (God!) wants it -- it should be overwhelmingly easy and enjoyable.
 2. It's not His fault it's ours: We often resist Him and respond with reservation.
 3. What's **behind** our problem? It's our sinful authority structures!
 4. Let's work together to **unmask and confront our hidden, sinful, powerful authority structures**. (First, let's develop a context. Read the text again.)

I. The Instruction in the Design of Creation.

- A. Our text is reflected in how we were created in the divine image.
"Let us make man in **our image** ..." Genesis 1:27,28
- B. Our text is reflected in the spiritual abilities given us in our creation.
"You will be **my treasured possession** ... a kingdom of priests"
Exodus 19:5,6 (See also Deut 7:6; 14:2; 26:18; Ps 135:4; Mal 3:17)
- C. Our text is reflected in the reason the angels were created.
"Let all God's angels worship **him** (the Lord Jesus)." Hebrews 1:6
- D. Our text is reflected in the divine calling we have been given.
"God, who has called you into **fellowship** with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful." I Cor 1:9
- E. Our text may be reflected in God's permissive decree to permit the Fall.
"... He who has been forgiven little **loves little**." Luke 7:47
- F. Our text is reflected in the oft-repeated invitation, "Come unto Me."
"If a man is thirsty, let him **come to me** and drink." John 7:37

Comment: God created you **so He could enjoy you** and display His glory in you and your life. He wants to give you the fullness of His love and joy. While He is pleased with your obedience He is more pleased with you **as a person**, as one who belongs to Him. And, He wants you to surrender unreservedly to Him so He can more fully enjoy you and you Him.

II. The Reasons Why We Struggle in Giving Ourselves Fully to the Savior.

Because of the Fall, our ancestral lines, the teaching from our past, the pressures from the world, the hidden and not so hidden working of Satan, and our own sin, we all have a subtle and powerful network of error, excuses, defense mechanisms, lies, protective devices, wrong conceptions of God, of ourselves, and of life, deceptions, wrong attitudes, and rationalizations deeply embedded within us. This maze of sin and error produces powerful pressures and needs that often structure our thinking and life even though we may be largely unaware of what is happening. We are often controlled by these hidden, sinful, and powerful authority structures. We must help and pray for one another so we may minimize, if not stop, perpetuating the Fall, and sin, within ourselves.

I've chosen the term "authority structures" to designate this inner struggle and control, not because these "structures" have an independent existence of their own. In reality they are all simply a part of our functions. The only exception would be the last one (L) our enemy.

- A. Our unbelief authority structures. ("I just know it won't work.")
 "If you can do **anything**, have pity on us and help us." Mark 9:22
- B. Our self-centered authority structures.
 "For as he **thinketh in his heart**, so is he." Proverbs 23:7 (KJV)
 - 1. Our pride ("I do not need help nor do I need to change!")
 - 2. Our pretense ("I have no personal problem, I'm all O.K.")
 - 3. Our passivity ("I want to be left alone, my status quo is fine.")
 - 4. Our peace ("I do not want to be disturbed. Leave me alone!")
 - 5. Our prestige ("I know what's right. Don't tell me to change!")
 - 6. Our power ("I'm in charge and I will do what I want to do!")
- C. Our religious self-centered authority structures. ("I want Him for my needs.")
 "You ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get **on your pleasures.**"
 James 4:3
- D. Our error and its authority structures. ("I'm not worthy and can't do it.")
 "Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by **believing** ...?"
 Galatians 3:2
- E. Our emotional authority structures. ("I don't feel like giving myself up.")
 "In ... a year, you who **feel** secure will tremble ..." Isaiah 32:10

- F. Our body authority structures. ("If I give myself to Him I'll have to stop")
"No, I beat my body, and **make it my slave** so ... not [to] be disqualified."
I Corinthians 9:27
- G. Our fear authority structures. ("I'm afraid of what may happen if I surrender.")
"Why are you so **afraid?** Do you still have no faith?" Mark 4:40
- H. Our past and its authority structures. ("It's all under the blood and that's that.")
"And when you stand praying ... **forgive**" Mark 11:25
- I. Our reputation and its authority structures. ("I must protect my prestige.")
"For they loved praise from men **more** than praise from God." John 12:43
- J. Our religious advantage and its authority structures. ("I'll gain by doing this.")
"These people honor me with their lips, but **their hearts are far from me.**"
Mark 7:6
- K. Our sinful control and its authority structures. ("I'll not give up my control.")
"Each of us has turned to **his own way.**" Isaiah 53:6
- L. Our enemy and his place in these authority structures. ("I spell Devil '_evil.'")
"How is it that Satan has so **filled** your heart ...?" Acts 5:3

III. The Event and Process of Giving Ourselves to the Lord Jesus.

- A. We must respond **to Him** -- and not our power structures.
"If a man is thirsty, let him come to me and drink." John 7:37
- B. We must respond **to Him as a Person** -- not as some religious power.
"I am the way and the truth and the life ..." John 14:6
- C. We must respond **to Him in trust** -- not as a religious experiment.
"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me." John 14:1
- D. We must respond **to Him in surrender** -- not as a projection of our desires.
"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life." John 6:68
- E. We must respond **to Him in invitation** -- not in confident cooperation.
"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock." Revelation 3:20
- F. We must respond **to Him in abandonment** -- not in protective reservation
"I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" Mark 9:24
- G. We must respond **to Him in obedience** -- not in an testing for hardship.
"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself" Mark 8:34

Comment: These suggestions regarding **giving ourselves** to the Lord Jesus are not subtle facets of **work righteousness**. We cannot make ourselves worthy of His attention, acceptance and ministry. They are simply pointers to how we can more fully open the doors of our person and life to Him.

Conclusion: The Lord Jesus has invited us to come and give yourselves to Him. No greater invitation could be given and no great honor could be bestowed. We cannot hesitate because of fear or unbelief or the feelings of being unworthy. We must simply do it and again each day. We must do it **because He wants us, and wants to enjoy us**.

We must ask ourselves if we are choosing to **deprive the Lord Jesus of the joy** He gains from our fellowship and obedience! And are we choosing to find our joy in some idol? Are we "saying" I prefer this sin to You, Lord Jesus?

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