

**Spend Your Life
for Christ**

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All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

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INTRODUCTION

“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin” (Romans 6:6).

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20).

I want to examine the psychology of being consumed for Christ. Again and again in God’s divine program, the Holy Spirit will call upon our hearts to be totally and completely consumed upon the altar of the Lord. Our lives are laid down and become as ashes to be carried out to a clean place. In one sense, this happens once, when we recognize the truth of Romans 6:6 and Galatians 2:20. Then we experience this reality by grace through faith. Yet, in another sense, over and over we will be consumed.

My future as a born-again believer is unique. In order to realize what God has in mind, I have to realize God and then have His mind. To be consumed readily means that everything not of God is burned out of me and purged away.

Sentimentality is one thing that must be purged from us. The best test for sentimentality is revealed in my attitude toward a good Christian friend who does not want to be consumed in Christ's purpose for his life. My attitude should be to love that person in truth. Truth and the convictions truth brings into my life will govern my exchanges with this person.

The Bible does not make a single provision for a believer to live outside of the process of discipleship. It doesn't matter if you are pushing seventy years of age, God has called you to be a disciple, a disciplined learner of the truth.

God wants divine viewpoint to consume each of us so that we can realize God and have the mind of Christ. In these pages, we will look at just how important it is for us to burn for Jesus and think as He thinks.

Chapter One

OFFERING UP YOURSELF TO GOD

“And the sons of Aaron brought the blood unto him: and he dipped his finger in the blood, and put it upon the horns of the altar, and poured out the blood at the bottom of the altar:

“But the fat, and the kidneys, and the caul above the liver of the sin offering, he burnt upon the altar; as the LORD commanded Moses.

“And the flesh and the hide he burnt with fire without the camp.

“And he slew the burnt offering; and Aaron’s sons presented unto him the blood, which he sprinkled round about upon the altar.

“And they presented the burnt offering unto him, with the pieces thereof, and the head: and he burnt them upon the altar.

“And he did wash the inwards and the legs, and burnt them upon the burnt offering on the altar.

“And he brought the people’s offering, and

took the goat, which was the sin offering for the people, and slew it, and offered it for sin, as the first.

“And he brought the burnt offering, and offered it according to the manner.

“And he brought the meat offering, and took an handful thereof, and burnt it upon the altar, beside the burnt sacrifice of the morning.

“He slew also the bullock and the ram for a sacrifice of peace offerings, which was for the people: and Aaron’s sons presented unto him the blood, which he sprinkled upon the altar round about,

“And the fat of the bullock and of the ram, the rump, and that which covereth the inwards, and the kidneys, and the caul above the liver:

“And they put the fat upon the breasts, and he burnt the fat upon the altar:

“And the breasts and the right shoulder Aaron waved for a wave offering before the LORD; as Moses commanded.

“And Aaron lifted up his hand toward the people, and blessed them, and came down from offering of the sin offering, and the burnt offering, and peace offerings.

“And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and came out, and

blessed the people: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto all the people.

“And there came a fire out from before the LORD, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces” (Leviticus 9:9-24).

The burnt offering beautifully displays the singularity of divine definition. The animal was taken, every part of it, and brought before the Lord. The ears were cut off and placed into the hands of the priest. That pictured the principle that the one making the offering was committing himself to hearing only the words of the Messiah. With the head, the eyes of the animal were put before the priest, and this spoke of people seeing only with the eyes of Christ. The process typified the truth expressed in Romans 12:1-2:

“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.

“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

No longer do I present my offering before the Lord. Instead of the substitute, I present my body before Him. As the parts of the animal were presented before the Lord, so are the parts of myself presented to Him, and the entire offering is consumed before God.

A young man came to me once and said, "I want to give myself to the ministry." What was He saying? He was saying that he was ready to be a burnt offering. He was ready to have Jesus consume every part of his life.

Numbering Our Days

We only have a few years here on earth. For some of us, those years have been reduced to months, or even days. The only way to live here is to enter into the psychology of being consumed. The fire of the Holy Spirit will come into us and consume our hearts and lives as we present our bodies.

We need to let God handle every detail of life by allowing God's will to be established in our conscious minds according to His Word. When I have entered into the psychology of being consumed, then there is not one speck of flesh that can hold on to anything.

The greatest thing that can happen to any-

one on earth is for him to get hid in the Body of Christ and make every moment count for God.

Here's a young person contemplating college. He could go to a secular college and prepare for a career and still be a good Christian and serve God. But what did Jesus say to His disciples? "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Luke 14:33). No one can answer this call unless he is willing to leave his nets by the water and allow himself to be consumed in the purpose of Christ.

Some never learn how to offer up their lives as burnt offerings. They never present themselves upon the altar. They live life according to the letter of the Word but not according to the power of the Spirit.

Chapter Two

PUTTING AWAY THE NATURAL LIFE

“Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy [Spirit].

“For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

“And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

“Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

“And they continued stedfastly in the apos-

bles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

"And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

"And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

"And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.

"And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

"Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:37-47).

Read through the book of Acts. Three thousand were added to the church, following Peter's sermon in Acts 2. Three thousand were baptized with love. Three thousand shared their property and had all things common and broke bread together daily. Three thousand people were in that group, and not one of them counted anything as his own. These three thousand people made their lives as burnt offerings.

Three thousand brought their eyes before the Lord so that they could see with singularity. Three thousand people brought their ears to

Him so that they could hear with an anointing. Three thousand offered their tongues and began to speak with grace and with peace. Their feet walked in righteousness and their hands served in holiness. Three thousand people were saying, "We will live as living sacrifices. We will allow the fire of the Lord to come and consume us."

A Christian cannot consume himself. He cannot even crucify himself. He cannot enter into the psychology of it, the study of it, the mind of it, unless the fire comes. Being consumed is a humiliating thing because all that we are is burnt up by all that He is. We are left with nothing to hold onto.

Renouncing Our Rights

Every believer needs to get to the place where he does not have a single right. He comes to where his mind has been crucified, his tongue has been burnt with fire. Adam, the old man, has been totally cut off in this condition. No longer does this believer look at his yesterdays and its comforts and conveniences. That is all put behind him. It is all gone, gone forever. He has been crucified. He has been buried. The fire comes in to take what he presents to God. He enters into the process, the progress, the life, and

the reality of being consumed.

This individual has said goodbye to sentimentality. He counts everything about his natural life as dung that he might win Christ and be found in Him and His righteousness (see Philippians 3:8-9). This believer has renounced his rights to everything. He did not do this according to the Law. He did not resign these things in an effort to measure up to some standard. No, he just put everything about himself on the altar and let the fire of God consume him.

He is totally and completely God's, and this is the way that he lives. He acts like it, he plans like it, he thinks like it, he responds like it. There is not a single thing in his mind and body that is reserved. He makes no provision for the flesh at all.

The humility of Jesus Christ has entered into him. He confesses His faults. He repents. He feels like dust, and yet he is a conqueror. He recognizes his weaknesses, and yet he knows that he has a great treasure. He is living in the power of it. He never compares himself to others. He makes no plans for his Adamic life at all. Everything about him equals this one thing: the presentation of his entire life and his trust upon God for the consequences of his commitment.

He is consumed upon the altar.

Why is this so vital?

It is so vital because it is the only way for a believer to live and produce God's life. What is the sense of serving God if we do not produce God's life in the process? What is the sense of being loved without loving others? What's the sense of having peace without sharing that peace? What's the sense of having power and not executing that power?

The only way Jesus Christ can evangelize and disciple others in this world is for every Christian to lay everything on the altar and be consumed. Let's allow the fire of the Spirit to take everything away until there's no trace of any attitude left in us.

Chapter Three

THE POWER OF SUFFICIENT GRACE

After a long day of helping some people with a special mission, I got home and I just had to go right to the Bible. I dived into the Psalms and meditated over a chapter from Proverbs. I was thinking about the depth of my opportunity with God. The Word of God so captivated me and captured my thoughts. I was not reading to find something to preach on; I was reading to be personally fed by God.

This happens when we allow ourselves to be consumed by God and spent for His purpose. Every single moment becomes available to Christ. This is a life of total humility. It is a life that carries an attitude that resigns everything to God. It is a life that had nothing to hide and nothing to be afraid of. You are not covering up anything. You are who you are by the grace of God.

Oh, we still have weaknesses. The treasure within us does not nullify our weaknesses. Instead, the splendor of God shines through our weaknesses. We live by the divine power of God's grace through an earthen vessel. The fact is that we will always have our earthen vessels until we are raptured or until we go home to be with the Lord. The good news is that Jesus lives in us and through us.

Our earthen vessel may try to rob us of our joy, but it can never steal the treasure that is within us. The treasure is displayed with royal splendor through the characteristics of our earthen vessels. My earthen vessel is simply a place where the treasure of God lives. Jesus took upon Himself an earthen vessel, and now He lives in the earthen vessels of all of those who have made themselves available to Him.

Thorns in the Flesh

“And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

“For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

“And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

“Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

“I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing” (2 Corinthians 7:7-11).

Paul prayed that God would remove his thorn, but it never happened. God wasn’t going to remove it. Still, the Lord did do something for the apostle Paul. He added grace upon grace to his life so that the treasure within him was revealed in spite of the thorn. God’s grace was enough to get Paul through his thorn experience. God’s strength was made perfect in Paul’s weakness. The apostle learned to glory in his tribulation and suffering. The power of God rested upon him.

In Matthew 17, on the Mount of Transfiguration, there was Jesus speaking with Moses and

Elijah as Peter, James, and John looked on. When Peter saw the brightness of their glorified bodies, he had a big idea. "Lord, let's built three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." At that instant, a cloud covered the mount and from it come a Voice: "This is My beloved Son; Hear Him." The command was not to hear Moses and the Law, nor was the command to listen to Elijah and the prophets. The Voice said, "Hear the Son and what He says."

The Lord was trying to consume the apostles with Himself. It was no longer about the Law. It was no longer about the prophets. It was no longer about tabernacles and places of worship. It was now all about Jesus. Be consumed with Christ and His Word and then go to the valley below and tell people about Him. Those were their instructions.

Be consumed by Christ and let Him purge and purify you. This kind of life will produce spiritual fruit. This is the type of life that is promoted and provided for. This is the type of life to which God gives His total and complete priority.

There is nothing phony, double-minded, or proud about this life. Insecurity and ineffectiveness are gone. Quietness and confidence in

Christ brings strength. This is the life that comes from a body that's been presented totally to the Lord. There is reality and resurrection. Relationships and temporal privileges have no more hold upon it. This is a body at real liberty because it is ready to be daily transformed and conformed to Christ.

CONCLUSION

We are at total liberty when our lives have been offered up to Jesus Christ. That is the great psychology of being consumed by the Spirit in the purpose of the Lord. Divided hearts and divided minds are no longer an issue. This life burns with the fire of God and lives in the energy that comes from knowing the truth.

The earthen vessel may cry out, "Please remove my problem—I cannot make it." Yet, the Treasure, the reality of Christ within shouts back, "Just let Me shine through you."

Sure, there will be times when we really feel frustration and failure. But the Treasure within will consume those thoughts. In our weaknesses, He will become stronger and stronger. In our fears, He will be faithful to display His love. In our sorrows, His joy will come through. Our lives are lives of limitation, but Christ reveals that He knows no limitations.

The earthen vessels that we are never feel as

if they can do anything right. And in reality that is very true. But our great Treasure, our Great Savior, is always there to show Himself to us. The character of God will be revealed. His attributes will be seen, and with that will come the necessary expression of God's life. We will get the portion we need from God's throne. The Treasure remains true, and He shines through.