

Empire Church of the Brethren

Sunday Service Sermons

25 August 2024

Yielding to the Holy Spirit

Text: "Do not quench the Spirit." 1 Thess. 5:19

How do we wish someone God's best?

Most likely the sentiment behind that good wish is the desire that they experience happiness and freedom from all the troubles that come in life, or that they are blessed with an abundance of what they want and need.

And wanting that is ok.

We need our basic human needs met.

But what is God's best?

To have God's best we must go beyond just human needs and wants.

Wishing God's best for someone is much more than just what they need in this life.

It is wanting the best when this life is over and the next life begins.

It is having what God wants us to have now and for eternity.

The key word to having God's best for us is the word "yield".

Yield means to give up, to surrender, to give place to.

God's very best is the discovery of the divine plan and purpose for our life.

It begins in the here and now and continues throughout eternity.

We can not achieve God's best by human efforts.

God unfolds his will and purpose for our lives as we yield ourselves to his Holy Spirit who resides within us.

God's proposition.

This is found in *Romans 12* the first verses.

"I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the patterns of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is, his good, pleasing and perfect will."

This is the scripture I chose to translate from the original Greek and discuss its meaning.

I am amazed at how clearly I remember doing this a lifetime ago.

I now wish I had done this in regard to many more passages.

Doing so gives me such a better understanding of what is being said.

Paul is pleading because of what God has done for us, His mercy, to respond by offering our very existence to him to be used by him for his glory and benefit.

This response is due to what God has done in our salvation.

To yield to God to be used by him is an act of the soul, the essence of our being given back to him to be used to bring His Kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

Two areas of our lives are affected by this yielding.

First is the dedication of the whole body as a living sacrifice to God.

As opposed to a dead animal sacrifice that was the custom before Jesus came.

We dedicate our existence to God for his use and benefit.

Remember for the Hebrew humankind is a whole unit.

The Greeks divided mankind into body, soul and spirit.

So for Paul saying give your body means giving your total self.

So when we give ourselves completely to God the Lord Jesus will be seen in everything we do.

Paul also tells us how this dedication of our bodies is maintained.

By the transformation and renewing of our minds.

The resetting of all that we are.

Jesus becomes the executive of us and he resets all parts of us to be like him in being God's person.

Accomplishing the will of Him who sent us.

Our mind is renewed as Christ moves in us and thinks through us.

For a time we had the phrase, "What would Jesus do."

It is a good way to begin all things that we do.

This is a good way to yield to Jesus working through us.

God's pattern.

God has provided a pattern through his Son, Jesus The Christ.

God has clearly set down for us the way he wants us to live.

Jesus clearly demonstrated his willingness to follow the will of God his Father.

Jesus gave his body in life and in death to accomplish the will of God who sent him.

We also need to think of our bodies as the vehicle God has provided through which we as followers of "The Way" carrying out the will of our heavenly father.

No, we are not perfect as was Jesus, therefore the issue is not our dogged determination to do something ourselves.

But it is being willing to let God do it through us by yielding to his Spirit within us.

Because Jesus was dedicated to his Father's will, three things happened in his life.

He was willing to go where his Father chose.

He lived the words of the hymn that says, "I'll go where you want me to go, dear Lord."

Jesus did, do we, really?

Also Christ was willing to be whatever his Father chose for him to be.

He laid aside the glory he had with the Father in heaven to come to earth, he was willing to be rejected, humiliated, spat upon, and crucified.

That was the Father's will for him.

We sing, "I'll be what you want me to be, dear Lord."

Jesus did, would we, really?

Also Jesus was willing to do whatever his Father chose for him to do.

He was obedient unto death, even death on a cross.

We sing, "I'll do what you want me to do, dear Lord.:

Jesus did, would we, really?

We must not let our own imperfection discourage us.

"It is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose."

God tells us what he wants us to do, then by his Spirit within us, as we yield to that Spirit, he does it.

He energizes us, motivates us, and enables us to do his will.

God's purpose.

Why are we to yield to his Holy Spirit within us?

What will bring it to pass in our lives?

It is to understand more fully, every day that we live, God's will for our lives.

How are we to yield to the Holy Spirit?

God will lead us by his Spirit if we are willing to do what he chooses for us to do.

God speaks loud enough for a willing heart to hear.

It is one thing to conceive some great, vague, far-distant will that God may have for our lives; it is quite another thing to say, "Lord, what would you have me to do today, in the midst of this humdrum, routine, often monotonous grind in which I live?"

Know that God's leading will always be in accordance with the Scriptures.

It is never true with God that the end justifies the means.

There is no such thing as sacrificing a minor principle in order to accomplish an ultimate goal.

The divine leadership is provided by the Holy Spirit who indwells us.

When we yield, or dedicate, ourselves to God, then increasingly we come to have the mind of Christ.

We start to think like God thinks.

And then he is able not only to convince us of what is wrong but also to give us a clear understanding of what is right for us.

To sacrifice is not to experience pain.

Nor does it require a sad sober face and attitude.

To sacrifice is to do another's will.

There may be some pain along the way, to be sure, but the prevailing atmosphere will be that of joy, and the blessing of God directing one's life and with that comes the peace of God.

Truly, "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you."

Always and forevermore

Such a life is the life that is following "The Way."

The way Jesus brought to earth of how to please God and be a part of God's plan for the world.

Try it, you will like it!