



Teaching the Believing Child about Consecration

Soon after salvation the believing child needs to be taught about the importance in making a once-for-all decision about who will be the boss of his life. Inside the heart of each believing child, a battle is going on for this number one position; a battle between Satan, the child's old sinful and selfish nature, and his Lord Jesus Christ. Teaching the child about the importance of **consecration** will help him to make the second most important decision in his life (after salvation)--that of consecration.

I. The Definition of Consecration

Consecration is a once-for-all giving of yourself and all you have for the worship and service of God. It is recognizing that He is the rightful owner and ruler of your life.

This definition comes from a study of both the Old and New Testaments. There are many examples in the Old Testament of people and things being set apart for the worship or service of God:

- *The whole tribe of Levi was set apart as the priests who represented the people before God and offered up their sacrifices (Numbers 8:14)
- *Aaron and his family were also set apart as priests, with Aaron being the first high priest (Numbers 3:3)
- *The "Nazarite vow" was an act of consecration of a person for a limited period of time, or for a lifetime (Numbers 6:2)
- *The tabernacle was consecrated (Exodus 40; Numbers 7:1)
- *The altar was consecrated (Numbers 7:84,88)
- *Solomon's temple was consecrated (1 Kings 8)



There was also a special ceremony designated in the Old Testament that pictures what the call to consecration is about. In Old Testament times, the people of God could possess slaves, but they were commanded to take good care of them. However, regardless of the reason for a person's slavery, the Law released him or her from slavery after seven years. It was possible for a slave to voluntarily choose to remain a slave under his master. Deuteronomy 15:16,17 explains both the reasons some may choose to do this, as well as the ceremony they needed to go through if that was the slave's desire:



*"And if it happens that he says to you, 'I will not go away from you,' because **he loves you**, and your house, since he **prospers** with you, then you shall take an awl and thrust it through his ear to the door, and he shall be your servant forever. Also to your female servant you shall do likewise."*

In other words, though the slave was free to go, he willfully chose to remain as a slave to his or her master because of love for the master and because the master had been so good to the slave. This is a picture of the call to consecration for the New Testament Believer. Christ has freed him from slavery to sin. But the Believer can choose to willfully become the slave of Christ because of all Christ has done for him and because of his love for Christ.

II. Key Verses on Consecrating One's Life



A. Romans 12:1

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service."



B. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

"Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."



C. Matthew 16:24

"Jesus said to His disciples, 'If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.'"

III. Important Teaching on Consecration

One of the best ways to teach about consecration is to explain one of the key verses on consecration phrase-by-phrase. The following example comes from **Romans 12:1**.

A. **What** is Consecration?

Consecration is a once-for-all giving of yourself and all you have for the worship and service of God. It is recognizing that He is the rightful owner and boss of your life.

B. **Who** Can Consecrate Themselves to God?

Consecration is for true Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. The word in our verse that reveals this is the word "brethren." This is a word used in the New Testament to describe all of those who have believed that Jesus Christ died in their place for their sins. John wrote:

*"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name."
--John 1:12*

If you have believed on Jesus as your Savior, then you are the one now being asked to consecrate yourself.

C. **What** is the Basis for Consecration?

The basis for this request is the "mercies of God." These "mercies" are all the things that were written in the first eleven chapters of Romans that God has done in order for you to not be condemned and punished forever because of your sins. In Romans 3:23 all are called sinners before God. In Romans 6:23 God says you deserve to die and be separated from God because of that sin. But God sent Jesus to die in your place, even when you were ungodly (Romans 5:6). Christ demonstrated how much God loves you by dying for you, and thus saving you from God's wrath against sin and making it possible for you to be brought back into a relationship with God. Wow! What mercies God has given! All the money in the world could not pay for these (Matthew 16:26). These mercies were God's gift to you.



D. **What** are You Consecrating to God?

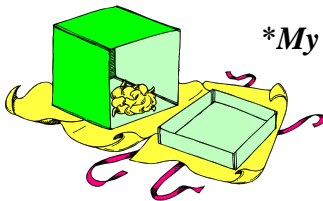
Based on God's mercies to you, He is asking for a gift from you. He wants you to *present your bodies a living sacrifice . . . to God.*" This means:

1. That you are to give Him your body (you) as long as you are alive. This means this is a once-for-all giving of yourself to Him, and not just for a month or a year.
2. It includes all you have or ever hope to have:
 - *All of your problems (now and in the future)
 - *All of your hopes and dreams (college, marriage, job, etc.)
 - *All of your possessions (toys, money, clothes, etc.)

You are giving them all to God for Him to use however He wants. This shows that you trust God to use them in the best way. He has the right to give you more or take away part of what you have now because He knows what is best for you.

E. **How** Can You Consecrate Yourself to God?

1. Present your body to God in prayer. *"Dear God, I give you . . ."*



***My eyes**--meaning I only want to use these eyes to look at things that please God. I do not want them to look at pictures, read books, or watch TV programs or view internet sites that God would not want me to. Rather, I want to see things God approves of.



***My ears**--meaning I don't want to listen to things God does not want me listening to--such as bad words, bad jokes, bad stories, or music that encourages me to think about and do what God says is wrong.



***My mouth**--meaning I should not use my lips to say bad words, tell lies, gossip, scream at people or say something that hurts someone else. Instead, I want to use it to say nice things and witness to others.

***My hands**--meaning I do not want to use them to do anything God does not like. I want to use them to do good, and to do what my parents ask me to do--not hit, or steal or make problems for others.

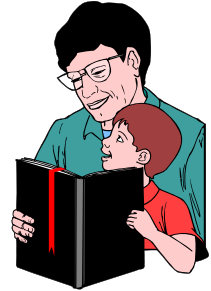


2. Commit yourself to remain "holy and acceptable to God"

To be *holy* means to keep yourself set apart from sin and set part for God by doing what is acceptable to Him. That means that this decision affects all future decisions. No longer should you base your decisions on what **you** want to do. Choose things that are holy and acceptable to God. Start each day by asking Him to guide you throughout the day to make the choices that would beset please Him.

F. **Why** You Should Consecrate Yourself to God

Romans 12:1 says that consecrating your life to God is "*your reasonable service.*" In other words, God is not asking you to do something unreasonable. When compared to all of His mercies to you in saving you from your sins and eternal punishment, consecrating your body is a reasonable and appropriate response for you to make. He wants you to be willing to do this because of your love for Him.



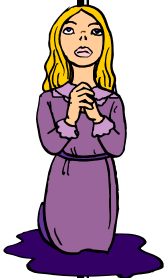
G. Inviting the Child to Consecrate His Life to God

After you have shared the teaching above on consecration, you want to give the believing child an opportunity to do this. Tell him to say a prayer like the following. Offer to help him if he wants. If he is not ready to pray this now, give him a copy of this prayer to take with him in order to think about it. Encourage him to do it soon.

A Prayer of Consecration

Next to choosing Jesus as your Savior from sin, this is the next most important decision. If you have not yet done it, will you do it today? Just pray this prayer to God and mean it with all of your heart. He will hear and accept your gift of yourself to Him. Now pray. . .

"Heavenly Father, I now give myself to You. Take my eyes . . . my ears . . . my mouth . . . my hands . . . my legs, all of my possessions, my hopes, and future possessions. Help me to use them in ways pleasing to You. Help me to keep my body holy and fully pleasing to You so that I can do Your will for my life every day. I am Yours forever!"



Signed _____ Date _____

**Put this prayer in your Bible to remind you of your promise to God*

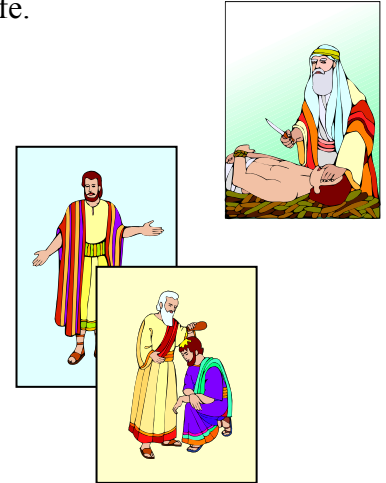
H. What Should You Do When You Disobey Your New Master?

After you have consecrated yourself to God, you should try to please Him every day. But when you choose to think, say, or do something that is not pleasing to God, you do **not** have to rededicate yourself to God. Consecration is a once-for-all giving of yourself for the worship and service of God. When you sin, He does not disown you, but rather He wants you to confess that sin to God as 1 John 1:9 tells you to do. After confessing your sin to God, remind yourself that God is still the boss of your life. Ask God to help you to understand and submit to His will in every area of your life.

IV. Ways to Teach About Consecration

A. Through Specific Bible Lessons

1. Abraham and Isaac
2. The dedication of Aaron and the Levites
3. Hannah dedicates Samuel
4. Daniel taken to Babylon (Daniel 1)



B. Through Special Lessons

1. Missionary stories (Jim Elliot)
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

C. Through Songs 🎵

1. He is Lord, He is Lord
2. I have Decided to Follow Jesus
- 3.
- 4.

D. Through Making and Using a Counseling Tool about Consecration

1. This tool can be made small enough to use with believing children in one-on-one situations (in response to specific invitations for consecration).
2. This tool can be made large enough to use before an entire class.

V. Counseling the Believing Child for Consecration

After you have given teaching on consecration in the class, you should:

A. Give an open invitation for Believing Children (only) to Consecrate Themselves

Make sure to distinguish the invitation for consecration from any invitation for salvation. Give any salvation invitation separately (preferably before the invitation for consecration). Be very clear in stating who this invitation is for.

"If you have already received Christ as your personal Savior, after what you have just heard about consecration, would you like to give yourself to God? If that is what you want to do, then _____ (raise your hand, stay after class, or give some other response)."

B. Counseling Those Who Respond to the Invitation for Consecration

When one or more children respond to an invitation for consecration, it is best to divide them into as many groups as you have teachers who are qualified to counsel. If you are the only one qualified to counsel them for consecration, then:

1. Establish the child's reason for coming to you by asking one of the following questions. Encourage him to express his desire in his own words.

*"What did you want to talk to me about?"
"Is there something you want to give to God today?"*

2. Question the child regarding his salvation Ask:

*"When did Jesus become your Savior?"
"Can you tell me about it?"*



Note: Before you go on to counsel a child for consecration, ask the Lord to confirm to you that the child is truly saved. If either you or the child has doubt, you may want to counsel him for salvation.

3. Read and explain Romans 12:1 as presented earlier.
4. Invite the child to pray a prayer of consecration (help him if he wants you to).
5. Pray for the child before he leaves and encourage him to keep his commitment to God.