

Andrew Murray:

But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For all things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee.Â”

To be able to offer anything to God is a perfect mystery. Consecration is a miracle of grace. Â”All things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee.Â” In these words there are four very precious thoughts I want to try and make clear to you: -

1. God is the Owner of all, and gives all to us.
2. We have nothing but what we receiveÂ—but everything we need we may receive from God.
3. It is our privilege and honour to give back to God what we receive from Him.
4. God has a double joy in His possessions when he receives back from us what He gave.

And when I apply this to my lifeÂ—to my body, to my wealth, property, to my whole being with all its powersÂ—then I understand what Consecration ought to be.

1. It is the glory of God, and His very nature, to be always GIVING. God is the owner of all. There is no power, no riches, no goodness, no love, outside of God. It is the very nature of God that He does not live for Himself, but for His creatures. His is a love that always delights to give. Here we come to the first step in consecration. I must see that everything I have is given by Him; I must learn to believe in God as the great Owner and Giver of all. Let me hold that fast. I have nothing but what actually and definitely belongs to God. Just as much as people say, Â”this money in my purse belongs to me,Â” so God is the Proprietor of all. It is His and His only. And it is His life and delight to be always giving. Oh, take that precious thoughtÂ— there is nothing that God has that He does not want to give. It is His nature, and therefore when God asks you anything, He must give it first Himself, and He will. Never be afraid whatever God asks; for God only asks what is His own; what He asks you to give He will first Himself give you. The Possessor, and Owner, and Giver of all! This is our God. You can apply this to yourself and your powers to all you are and have. Study it, believe it, live in it, every day, every hour, every moment.

2. Just as it is the nature and glory of God to be always giving, it is the nature and glory of man to be always receiving. What did God make us for? We have been made to be each of us a vessel into which God can pour out His life, His beauty, His happiness, His love. We are created to be each a receptacle and a reservoir of divine heavenly life and blessing, just as much as God can put into us. Have we understood this, that our great workÂ—the object of our creationÂ—is to be always receiving? If we fully enter into this, it will teach some precious things. One thingÂ—the utter folly of being proud or conceited. What an idea! Suppose I were to borrow a very beautiful dress, and walk about boasting of it as if it were my own, you might say, Â”What a fool!Â” And here it is the Everlasting God owns everything we have; shall we dare to exalt ourselves on account of what is all His? Then what a blessed lesson it will teach us of what our position is! I have to do with a God whose nature is to be always giving, and mine to be always receiving. Just as the lock and key fit each other, God the Giver and I the receiver fit into each other. How often we trouble about things, and about praying for them, instead of going back to the root of things, and saying, Â”Lord, I only crave to be the receptacle of what the Will of God means for me; of the power and the gifts and the love and Spirit of God.Â” What can be more simple? Come as a receptacle Â—cleansed, emptied and humble. Come, and then God will delight to give. If I may with reverence say it, He cannot help Himself; it is His promise, His nature. The blessing is ever flowing out of Him. You know how water always flows into the lowest places. If we would but be emptied and low, nothing but receptacles, what a blessed life we could live! Day by day just praising HimÂ—Thou givest and I accept. Thou bestowest and I rejoice to receive. How many tens of thousands of people have said this morning: Â”What a beautiful day! Let us throw open the windows and bring in the sunlight with its warmth and cheerfulness!Â” May our hearts learn every moment to drink in the light and sunshine of God’s love.

Â”Who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For all things come of Thee, and we have given Thee of Thine own.Â”

3. If God gives all and I receive all, then the third thought is very simpleÂ—I must give all back again. What a privilege that for the sake of having me in loving, grateful intercourse with Him, and giving me the happiness of pleasing and serving Him, the Everlasting God should say, Â”Come now, and bring Me back all that I give.Â”

And yet people say, "Oh, but must I give everything back? Brother, don't you know that there is no happiness or blessedness except in giving to God! David felt it. He said: "Lord, what an unspeakable privilege it is to be allowed to give that back to Thee which is Thine own!" Just to receive and then to render back in love to Him as God, what He gives. Do you know what God needs you for? People say, "Does not God give us all good gifts to enjoy?" But do you know that the reality of the enjoyment is in the giving back? Just look at Jesus—God gave Him a wonderful body. He kept it holy and gave it as a sacrifice to God. This is the beauty of having a body. God has given you a soul; this is the beauty of having a soul—you can give it back to God. People talk about the difficulty they meet with in having so strong a will. You never can have too strong a will, but the trouble is we do not give that strong will up to God, to make it a vessel in which God can and will pour His Spirit, so as to fit it to do splendid service for Himself.

We have now had the three thoughts: God gives all; I receive all; I give up all. Will you do this now? Will not every heart say, "My God, teach me to give up everything?" Take your head, your mind with all its power of speaking, your property, your heart with its affections—the best and most secret—take gold and silver, everything, and lay it at God's feet and say, "Lord, here is the covenant between me and Thee. Thou delightest to give all, and I delight to give back all." God teach us that. If that simple lesson were learnt, there would be an end of so much trouble about finding out the Will of God, and an end of all our holding back, for it would be written, not upon our foreheads, but across our hearts, "God can do with me what He pleases; I belong to Him with all I have." Instead of always saying to God, "Give, give, give," we should say, "Yes, Lord, Thou dost give, thou dost love to give, and I love to give back." Try that life and find out if it is not the very highest life.

4. God gives all, I receive all, I give all. Now comes the fourth thought: God does so rejoice in what we give to Him. It is not only I that am the receiver and the giver, but God is the Giver and the Receiver too, and, may I say it with reverence, has more pleasure in the receiving back than even in giving. With our little faith we often think they come back to God again all defiled. God says, "No, they come back beautiful and glorified"; the surrender of the dear child of His, with his aspirations and thanksgivings, brings it to God with a new value and beauty. Ah! Child of God you do not know how precious the gift that you bring to your Father, is in His sight. Have I not seen a mother give a piece of cake, and the child comes and offers her a piece to share it with her? How she values the gift! And your God, oh, my friends, your God, His heart, His Father's heart of love, longs, longs, longs to have you give Him everything. It is not a demand. It is a demand, but it is not a demand of a hard Master, it is the call of a loving Father, who knows that every gift you bring to God will bind you closer to Himself, and every surrender you make will open your heart wider to get more of his spiritual gifts. Oh, friends! A gift to God has in His sight infinite value. It delights Him. He sees of the travail of His soul and is satisfied. And it brings unspeakable blessing to you. These are the thoughts our text suggests; now comes the practical application. What are the lessons? We here learn what the true dispositions of the Christian life are.

To be and abide in continual dependence upon God. Become nothing, begin to understand that you are nothing but an earthen vessel into which God will shine down the treasure of His love. Blessed is the man who knows what it is to be nothing, to be just an empty vessel meet for God's use. Work, the Apostle says, for it is God who worketh in you to will and to do. Brethren, come and take tonight the place of deep, deep dependence on God. And then take the place of child-like trust and expectancy. Count upon your God to do for you everything that you can desire of Him. Honour God as a God who gives liberally. Honour God and believe that He asks nothing from you but what he is going first to give. And then come praise and surrender and consecration. Praise Him for it! Let every sacrifice to Him be a thank-offering. What are we going to consecrate? First of all our lives. There are perhaps men and women—young men and women—whose hearts are asking, "What do you want me to do—to say I will be a missionary?" No, indeed, I do not ask you to do this. Deal with God, and come to Him and say, "Lord of all, I belong to Thee, I am absolutely at Thy disposal." Yield up yourselves. There may be many who cannot go as Missionaries, but oh, come, give up yourselves to God all the same to be consecrated to the work of His Kingdom. Let us bow down before Him. Let us give Him all our powers—our head to think for His Kingdom, our heart to go out in love for men, and however feeble you may be, come and say: "Lord, here I am, to live and die for Thy Kingdom. Some talk and pray about the filling of the Holy Spirit. Let them pray more and believe more. But remember the Holy Spirit came to fit men to be messengers of the Kingdom, and you cannot expect to be filled with the Spirit unless you want to live for Christ's Kingdom. You cannot expect all the love and peace and joy of heaven to come into your life and be your treasures, unless you give them up absolutely to the Kingdom of God, and possess and use them only for Him. It is the soul utterly given up to God that will receive in its emptying the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Dear friends we must consecrate not only ourselves—body and soul—but all we have. Some of you may have children; perhaps you have an only child, and you dread the very idea of letting it go. Take care, take care; God deserves your confidence, your love, and your surrender. I plead with you; take your children and say to Jesus: "Anything Lord, that pleases Thee." Educate your children for Jesus. God help you to do it. He may not

accept all of them, but He will accept of the will, and there will be a rich blessing in your soul for it. Then there is money. When I hear appeals for money from every Society; when I hear calculations as to what the Christians of England are spending on pleasure, and the small amount given for Missions, I say there is something terrible in it. God's children with so much wealth and comfort, and giving away so small a portion! God be praised for every exception! But there are many who give but very little, who never so give that it costs them something, and they feel it. Oh, friends! Our giving must be in proportion to God's giving. He gives you all. Let us take it up in our Consecration prayer: "Lord, take it all, every penny I possess. It is all Thine." Let us often say "It is all His." You may not know how much you ought to give. Give up all, put everything in His hands, and He will teach you if you will wait.

We have heard this precious message from David's mouth. We Christians of the nineteenth century, have we learned to know our God who is willing to give everything? God help us to.

And then the second message. We have nothing that we do not receive, and we may receive everything if we are willing to stand before God and take it.

Thirdly. Whatever you have received from God give it back. It brings a double blessing to your own soul.

Fourthly. Whatever God receives back from us comes to Him in Heaven and gives Him infinite joy and happiness, as he sees His object has been attained. Let us come in the spirit of David, with the spirit of Jesus Christ in us. Let us pray our Consecration Prayer. And may the Blessed Spirit give each of us grace to think and to say the right thing, and to do what shall be pleasing in the Father's sight.