

## MOODY DISTANCE LEARNING

### Presenting Oneself to God

*Greg Wheatley:* Welcome to Radio School of the Bible, a ministry of the Center for External Studies at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. My name is Greg Wheatley. I'm your host for these broadcasts and each quarter on Radio School of the Bible we have a different instructor and a different topic of study. Now some quarters it's a Bible study, a book of the Bible that we go through verse by verse and during other quarters it's a topical study and that happens to be the case this quarter as we study together God's Will for Your Life. Now without any further delay let's continue in our study of God's Will for Your Life. Here's our instructor Dr. Bill Thrasher.

*Dr. Bill Thrasher:* Thank you very much Greg. We're going to take a turn today. We've said two main points. We've developed the second one at quite length, but the first main point we said was the person that wants to understand God's will and know God's will and experience it must understand God's purpose for their life. We took time to answer several questions that led us to the conclusion that God's purpose for every life is that we learn to trust and love and delight in Him. Then we also said secondly that a person who wants to know God's will much have a greater desire to know God than to know God's will. We looked at various truths about God and how responding to him leads us to the experience of God's will. It leads us into the experience of having a right view of ourselves and having meaning and purpose in our life, having a sense of contentment and a sense of security.

Well here's the point I want to make today and develop it in the next few broadcasts. A person who wants to know God's will must respond to the revelation of God's character. How do I respond to the revelation of God's character? We've sort of given insights along the way as we've resulted – as we've talked about various aspects of the attributes of God but what we want to talk about today is this idea of presenting our life to the Lord which God says results in His will.

"I urge you therefore brethren by the mercies of God to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice acceptable to God which is your spiritual service of worship and do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind that you may prove what is the will of God that which is good and acceptable and perfect."

It's the basis of this exhortation that I'd first like us to look at. I can say this and I'm somewhat ashamed to say it but it's the truth in regard of what would go through my mind. As a boy was an uninformed Christian but as a boy I would maybe be in a meeting where people were being encouraged to yield their life to the Lord. The thought that would go through my mind Greg was this, "Lord, I wonder what unlucky person's going to get called tonight?" I feel like I guess somebody has to do it but all that just reflect of my total real ignorance of who God is. The basis of this exhortation is the mercies of God and the mercies of God there speaks of God's attribute of mercy as well as – in broad sense it's what – it's who God is and what He's done. In light of that – what – He says, "Present your life to me."

In light of what we've said on these broadcasts, if there is one who is eternal and many things – most things are not eternal, if there is one who is immutable – most things change. You can't depend upon him. If there is someone who knows everything and therefore I guess his will would be best if he knows all the options and he promises to give me the best, if there is one who can be with me at all times, who is perfect wisdom, who is perfect power, perfect love, who's holy, there is not taint in his character, he's absolutely faithful, he's completely in control, he's merciful, he's gracious, he's good I think a person would say, "If I could get one accurate glimpse of God it would be utter insanity not to want to put my life into His hands."

*Greg Wheatley:* Yeah. I remember on that track, Dr. Thrasher, I remember I think it was Charles Swindoll who I heard say that real insanity really is being out of the will of God or being in a state where we're in rebellion against God. That really – there's biblical precedent for that if you look at Nebuchadnezzar and so forth.

*Dr. Bill Thrasher:* That's true.

*Greg Wheatley:* But really, the insanity is not yielding to His will. It's being out of His will isn't it?

*Dr. Bill Thrasher:* Absolutely. So the basis of this exhortation I find is very important in a sense to stress to one's own heart. God has said many things to the Church here at Rome before He gives us this exhortation. He's revealed Himself, His character. In fact the Book of Romans

I did my dissertation on the attribute of God in Pauline Theology and I remember going through book by book just inductively seeing what it taught about the character of God. I remember as I went through Romans, almost all of what he said in all of his 13 letters you'll find in the Book of Romans it's an incredible emphasis in regard to the character of God here in the Book of Romans. The character of God and the blessings of God, that's the foundation for this exhortation to present our life to him. God didn't say, "Present your life to me in order to be accepted by me." He said – He's already talked about full justification and being entirely accepted by him. He doesn't say, "Present your life to me and then this or that." He says, "You have full acceptance of me."

There's a glorious future He's talked about there in Romans 8:10. It's so glorious it's even the sufferings of this world are not worthy to be compared to the glory that should be revealed to us. He said there's new life in Christ. We've been liberated from sin's control. So He's told us all these things. We don't earn these things by presenting our life to the Lord but it does lead into the experience of these things.

So the basis of this exhortation is who God is and what God has done. What exactly does it mean to present our bodies to the Lord? I want to just read what I wrote out one day and really this is to the inspiration of listening to a particular individual speak about commitment. So some of these words are mine. Some of these words are somebody else's and I'm not sure which is which to be honest but the idea – I did include this quote on the printed notes in a sense that it will be sending it out. There's nothing magic about these words but I think these words do express the idea of what it means to present our bodies to God living holy sacrifice.

"Based on a right view of you and all that you've done for me, I joyfully make a definite commitment that I recognize your ownership of my life and I yield every part of my life and all possessions and relationships for your possession and control from this moment forth and forever. I am available for whatever you want, whenever you want it, and however you want it as long as I live. All my decisions will be made in light of this." You see, what God wants is the control of your life.

I've known this, that when I would fudge on a certain area, then you know what I'd be vulnerable to do, Greg? I'd be vulnerable to start making certain sacrifices, sacrifices that quite frankly God hasn't prompted me to make, but it was just one way of trying to – what – clear my conscience because of some area I really hadn't yielded to the Lord. God's way demands everything. But in that sense, it's easier because we can be opening ourselves up to false burdens that are not of the Lord. But God says, "Present the totality of your life to me."

That's the issue, the control of your life. I'm sure I read that too fast for somebody to copy down but I said we did include that in the notes. If they send for the notes they'll get that quote.

I can remember a number of years ago hearing a man speak. It was Dr. Carl Armerding is who it was. He was 85 years of age when I heard him speak. He spoke about this verse, Romans 12:1 and 2. He said when he came to Christ when he was 15 years of age and when he was 17 years of age he read Romans 12:1 and 2 and it struck him so much that he began to ask other Christians to explain it to him.

So he asked a fellow Christian one day had he read this verse and he said, "Oh sure, I've memorized it." He asked him, "Have you ever done it?" He said, "No." He says, "Do you know how to do it," and he said, "No," and he asked another and he got the same response and he said, "You're no help." So he finally asked another one and this is what this man told him. He says, "I want you to go to your room and lock the door, put your finger on this verse, get on your knees and tell God you want to do it." So he did it.

He said, "That's when God struck him that it meant the totality of his life and God meant everything, all parts of his body, his eyes, his brain, his legs, everything." He said he did it before leaving that room. He said, "That transaction has saved me and preserved me," Dr. Armading said, 85 years of age, "from all kinds of temptation to sin in my young years." At a time that he supposedly had cancer, a Jewish physician was examining him and he was asking him certain question in regard to, "Do you do this; do you drink; do you smoke," in regard to how he used his body and he said, "No." He said the Jewish physician said, "You know it's paying off." The blessing of this decision, the idea, putting our – being able to place our life and our body – it's amazing. God says it's acceptable. He accepts us. The invitation to present our life in the hands of God.

*Greg Wheatley:*

Maybe it would be helpful, Dr. Thrasher, to talk a little bit about the practical implications of that and whether it means a once in a lifetime decision or whether this is a daily yielding of ourselves to God or how that fleshes itself out in the life of a Christian.

*Dr. Bill Thrasher:* Yes, that's an excellent question. Certainly it is a commitment that is aimed at the totality of one's life. So while there may be a crisis commitment – there's nothing wrong necessarily with that – but it always must be followed by a process. I remember reading a book one day. The title of that book is *They Found the Secret*. I don't know if you've ever read that book. It's Dr. Edmund, a past president of Wheaton College wrote that book and it's about 19 different lives. Each chapter is a different biography. It talks about – sort of the theme of it is how they reach a point of surrender of their life to the Lord, but it's always followed by a process. Also I notice another theme is that many times what hinders that is fear and I think that's true in all of our lives. It's a scary thing to lose control of one's life and yet – many times there's one thing that's between that person and truly surrendering their life to the Lord.

*Greg Wheatley:* I'm sure that God tailors each situation to each one of His children. In other words, your experience might not identically match mine. There's always room for that as well.

*Dr. Bill Thrasher:* I think that's very important because sometimes I think we can try to duplicate an experience of someone that we greatly admire and yet, God's a personal God. But it's His desire that He brings us and graciously gives us the opportunity to present our life to Him.

*Greg Wheatley:* Well another tremendously helpful session. Dr. Thrasher, thank you for this Bible study today. We are in the midst of a study on God's Will for Your Life as a part of Radio School of the Bible. We're glad you are a part of it. I'm Greg Wheatley and we'll see you again next time in Radio School of the Bible.

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