

Are You All In?

Why God calls us to complete consecration—right before He's about to do something amazing

A band of brave souls became known as one-way missionaries a century ago. They bought tickets to the mission field without the return half. Instead of suitcases, they packed their few earthly belongings into coffins. As they sailed away, they waved goodbye to everyone they loved and all they knew, knowing they'd never return home.

A.W. Milne was one of those missionaries. He set sail for the New Hebrides in the South Pacific, aware that the headhunters there had martyred every missionary before him. Milne didn't fear for his life because he had already died to himself. His coffin was packed.

For 35 years he lived among that tribe. When he died, they buried him in the middle of the village and inscribed this on his tombstone: "When he came there was no light. When he left there was no darkness."

When did we start believing God wants to send us to safe places to do easy things? That playing it safe is safe? That radical is anything but normal? Jesus didn't die to keep us safe. He died to make us dangerous. Faithfulness is not holding the fort. It's storming the gates of hell. The will of God is not an insurance plan. It's a daring plan. And the complete surrender of your life to the cause of Christ isn't radical. It's normal. It's time to quit living as if the purpose of life is to arrive safely at death.

More than 100 years ago, a British revivalist issued a holy dare that would change a life, a city and a generation: "The world has yet to see what God will do with and for and through and in and by the man who is fully and wholly consecrated to Him." The original hearer of that call to consecration was

D.L. Moody. When those words hit his eardrums, they didn't just fire across synapses and register in his auditory cortex. They shot straight to his soul. That call to consecration defined his life. It was Moody's *all in* moment.

Moody left an indelible imprint on his generation. In 1893, his sermons were literally front-page news. Every message was transcribed on the front page of the *New York Times*. More than a century later, his passion for the gospel continues to indirectly influence millions. Moody left an incredible legacy, but it all started with a call to consecration.

Likewise, you are one decision away from a totally different life. It might be the toughest decision you ever make, but if you have the courage to completely surrender yourself to the lordship of Jesus Christ, there's no telling what God will do.

When God is about to do something amazing in our lives, He calls us to consecrate ourselves to Him. That pattern was set right before the Israelites conquered the Promised Land, when Joshua told the people, "Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do amazing things among you" (Josh. 3:5, NIV).

Here's our problem: *We try to do God's job for Him.* We want to do amazing things for God. That seems noble, but we've got it backward. God wants to do amazing things for us! That's His job, not ours. Our job is consecration. And if we do our job, He'll certainly do His.

Before I tell you what consecration is, let me tell you what it isn't: It's not going to church once a week. It's not daily devotions. It's not fasting during Lent. It's not keeping the Ten Commandments. It's not sharing your faith. It's not giving God the tithe. It's not repeating the sinner's prayer. It's not volunteering for a ministry. It's not leading a small group. It's not raising your hands in worship. It's not going on a mission trip.

All of those are good things, but they aren't consecration. It's more than behavior modification. It's more than conformity to a moral code. It's more than doing good deeds. It's something deeper, something truer.

The word *consecration* means "to be set apart." By definition, it demands full devotion. It's dethroning yourself and enthroning Jesus. It's the complete divestiture of all self-interest. It's giving God veto power. It's surrendering all of you to all of Him. It's a simple recognition that every second of time and every penny of money is a gift *from* God and *for* God. Consecration is an ever-deepening love for Jesus, a childlike trust in the heavenly Father and blind obedience to the Holy Spirit. Consecration is all that and a thousand things more. But for the sake of simplicity, let me give you my personal definition of it: Consecration is going *all in* and *all out* for the *All in All*.

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