

Why the Church Must Rebuild the Altar of Consecration

Where is the American church? American institutions continue to fall like dominoes to the woke, ungodly culture, with Disney being the latest to succumb.

Disney executives announced they will no longer use gender distinctive language such as “ladies and gentlemen” or “boys and girls” and that they will target children with new transgender-affirming programming.

This should cause every Christian to ask if we are not missing something. As the church of Jesus Christ, should we not have more influence on our culture than LGBT activists? Did Jesus not call His followers the salt of the earth and the light of the world? (See Matt. 5:13-16.) Why is our influence so small? The surprising answer came to me during a recent time of prayer.

As I sat in my chair late one night communing with the Lord, my heart began to grieve because of America’s cultural descent into godlessness and moral confusion. I also grieved over the feckless state of the American church and its inability to stop or even slow the enemy’s onslaught. I then heard the Lord speak to my heart, saying, “There is a lesson for the church today from the life of Samson.”

As I then read and reread the story of Samson in Judges 13-16, it was clear that the word God wants to speak to the church today is *consecration*. You see, Samson was consecrated as a Nazirite while in his mother’s womb. “Nazirite” comes from the Hebrew word *Nazir*, which means consecrated or separated. That which is consecrated to God is completely given over to Him.

We Cannot Divorce Power From Purity

The Nazirite vow was a solemn commitment that Samson would live a separated life unto God, wholly dedicated to His purpose. The outward sign of this consecration was that he would never cut his hair. His consecration was the key to his power.

So long as Samson lived in this consecration, he was invincible. He was able to face and overcome everything the enemies of God threw at him. On one occasion, he alone killed a thousand Philistines with the jawbone of a donkey.

There is no reason to believe that Samson was bulging with muscles as portrayed in modern movies and art. It wasn't the size of his biceps that gave him power; it was the depth of his consecration.

Samson lost his power when he compromised his consecration. He compromised his consecration by consorting with a Philistine woman named Delilah and revealing to her the secret of his power. Then, having lulled Samson to sleep on her lap, she called in the Philistines, who cut off his hair while he slept.

Shorn of his locks and his power, Samson could no longer stand against his enemies. He was taken captive by the Philistines, who gouged out his eyes, bound him with bronze fetters and put him to work pushing a turnstile in a circle all day grinding grain. How the mighty had fallen!

Is it possible that today's church lacks the power to face down the rampant godlessness and immorality engulfing our culture because, like Samson, we have consorted with the world and compromised our consecration to God?

There Is Still Hope

Even in his weakened and broken state there was hope for Samson. Judges 16:22 tells how Samson's hair began to grow as he toiled day after day in the prison. This was an outward

sign of the renewal of his Nazirite consecration to God.

Then one day during a great celebration in a massive theater, the Philistines brought Samson out to entertain the gathered throng as an object of mirth and ridicule. He was forced to perform for the crowd so they could revel in the humiliation and devastation of the one who had caused them so much pain in the past.

What the Philistines did not realize was that Samson's hair had grown back—at least to a degree. His consecration had been renewed, and God would display His power through Samson one final time.

After being taunted, mocked and ridiculed, the blind and broken Samson was led by a young man to a place between the two giant pillars that supported the stadium. Samson placed a hand on each pillar and prayed, "Strengthen me, I pray, just this once, O God!" (Judg.16:28, NKJV).

Samson no longer feared death. He wanted victory again more than life itself. As he pushed against the two pillars with all his might, he cried out to God, "Let me die with the Philistines!" (Judg. 16:30). The two pillars gave way, and the stadium came crashing down, killing thousands of Philistines—and Samson with them.

I am here reminded of what Jonathan Edwards prayed just before the Great Awakening transformed New England. Having consecrated himself to God, he desired an awakening more than life itself. With great passion he prayed to God, "Give me New England or let me die."

We Must Rebuild the Altar of Consecration

When Elijah confronted the 400 false prophets on Mount Carmel, his first act was an act of consecration. At a time when Israel had compromised their faith in *Yahweh* and were consorting with Baal, Elijah called the nation to renew their

consecration to God. Scripture says in 1 Kings 18:30b, "And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was broken down."

The altar was a place of sacrifice—a place of consecration. After repairing the altar of the Lord and placing the sacrifice upon it, Elijah prayed a 20-second prayer, and the fire of God fell from heaven. The mass of people gathered there fell on their faces, crying out, "The Lord, He is God! The Lord, He is God!" (1 Kings 18:39).

In Roman 12:1-2 (NIV), Paul called on the Roman believers to consecrate themselves to God by making their bodies living sacrifices. He wrote, "Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God ... Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."

My Father Builds an Altar and Sees a Display of Power

When my older brother, Pete, was 7 years old, he was run over by a farm tractor and critically injured. He had blood bubbling from his eyes, mouth, nose and ears. My dad rushed him to the nearest hospital, where three doctors examined him and agreed he wouldn't live more than 10 minutes.

They went on to explain that, even before they took X-rays, they knew from the bleeding that a broken rib had punctured a lung. They then wheeled Pete away for X-rays, and my dad was left alone with his thoughts and questions.

As he stood alone in silence, the thing foremost on my dad's mind was that for five years he had ignored the call of God to full-time ministry. With only a fourth-grade education as well as a family to care for, it seemed an absolute impossibility that he could become a pastor or minister.

But facing the death of his son, Dad knew he had to respond by building an altar of consecration. Therefore, he stepped into

a nearby restroom, raised his right hand and said, "Lord, I'm ready!" It was only three words, but those words came from the depth of his being. It was an act of total surrender. It was a consecration!

Immediately the power of God fell and the gift of faith dropped into my dad's heart. I heard him tell this numerous times growing up, and in his words, "I suddenly knew that Pete was going to be OK. I didn't know how I knew, but I knew."

He came out of the restroom and had to wait to hear from the doctors, but his heart was at peace and full of faith. After about one hour, one of the doctors emerged and said, "Mr. Hyatt, there has been a higher power here tonight." He then said, "We know your son had a broken rib that had punctured his lung. But we have finished the X-rays, the bleeding has stopped, and there is not a broken bone in his body."

A nurse who attended the same church as my parents testified that she had never felt the presence and power of God as she did in Pete's room. My dad's act of consecration and the ensuing miracle launched him into the ministry. Despite his lack of education and training, he went on to be a successful pastor for many years before his death in 1994.

This Is the Time

It is time for pastors, leaders and churches all across America to rebuild the altars of consecration that are broken down. We must repent for being more concerned with what modern culture thinks of us than what God thinks of us. As we rebuild the altars of consecration, the fire of God will fall, His power will flow and we will see this nation turn back to God.
{eoa}

Dr. Eddie Hyatt is an author, Bible teacher, revivalist and church historian. His books documenting America's birth out of the first Great Awakening are available from Amazon and his website at .

For the original article, visit .

Read articles like this one and other Spirit-led content in our new platform, CHARISMA PLUS.