

A Dedicated Life

The question of ownership must be settled once and for all. There are certain floors and rooms in organisations that are set apart for specific use. There are certain areas of buildings that only some people have access to.

1 Cor 6:20

you were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your bodies.

How would you feel if you have purchased a piece of land but there squatters don't want to leave? Are there spiritual squatters in your life right now? It is fraudulent that after payment has been made Jesus has no access to us. He paid in advance by faith, believing that we will turn to him. He has paid for the harvest and is desperate to see it come to Him.

1 Cor 6:19-20

"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; 20 you were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your body,"

When He purchased you, your identity changed. You became something else. It's like our venue that was used for martial arts but is now being used as a church building under a new stewardship and contract.

It's important to explore the concept of dedication because dedicated people do certain things differently. Warfare is not limited to words and prayer. It often involves acts of holiness. For example, one of the main ways to overcome the spirit of mammon is through tithing and generosity.

Romans 12:20-21

On the contrary, "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink. For in so doing, you will heap burning coals on his head." 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

God might say to you "In order to dismantle pride in your organisation go and humble yourself and serve that person there."

How do you get God's wisdom flowing in your life? Rely on it. Embrace the mind of Christ. What strongholds get into the way of this life? Self-reliance is a big one.

A dedicated life has many blessings that come with it, but as we embark on this journey let's also remember the consequences. We need to understand what it really entails.

Proverbs 20:25 – Dedication involves vows.

It is a trap to dedicate something rashly and only later to consider one's vows.

Dedication involves becoming a gift. You can't say I am a gift but I will do what I feel like doing. Dedication comes with responsibility. Let's go through this passage to see what comes with the dedicated life.

Numbers 18:1-7

The Lord said to Aaron, “You, your sons and your family are to bear the responsibility for offenses connected with the sanctuary, and you and your sons alone are to bear the responsibility for offenses connected with the priesthood. 2 Bring your fellow Levites from your ancestral tribe to join you and assist you when you and your sons minister before the tent of the covenant law. 3 They are to be responsible to you and are to perform all the duties of the tent, but they must not go near the furnishings of the sanctuary or the altar. Otherwise both they and you will die. 4 They are to join you and be responsible for the care of the tent of meeting—all the work at the tent—and no one else may come near where you are. 5 “You are to be responsible for the care of the sanctuary and the altar, so that my wrath will not fall on the Israelites again. 6 I myself have selected your fellow Levites from among the Israelites as a gift to you, dedicated to the Lord to do the work at the tent of meeting. 7 But only you and your sons may serve as priests in connection with everything at the altar and inside the curtain. I am giving you the service of the priesthood as a gift. Anyone else who comes near the sanctuary is to be put to death.”

Many of us think we are quite holy so it’s important to start with an assessment.

I will teach this lesson by contrasting the dedicated life with the undedicated life. I will highlight some signs of the undedicated life and then give you the Godly alternative.

What are some signs that your life is not yet set apart for God?

1. Lack of excellence and impure motives in your work

If you are truly doing something stemming from a revelation of God’s calling and holiness, you will do it as unto the Lord. When you know that you have been set apart by God and for God it affects how you go about your work and service.

Colossians 3:22-23

NIV

22Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to curry their favour, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters,

NLT

22 Work hard and cheerfully at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people.

This means you are not serving out of fear or with ulterior motives.

Ephesians 6: 6 -7 It’s not just seen in tasks but in how we serve and love people.

Obey them not only to win their favour when their eye is on you, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. 7 Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people,

It’s interesting that Paul says the same thing to the church at Ephesus.

God's Alternative

Set apart by God for God

Lord prepare me to be a sanctuary.

Being set apart for God's purpose precedes the anointing for the work. Bezalil and Aholiab were first called by name and then anointed for the work.

Exodus 35:30-35

And Moses said to the children of Israel, "See, the Lord has called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; 31 and He has filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom and understanding, in knowledge and all manner of workmanship, 32 to design artistic works, to work in gold and silver and bronze, 33 in cutting jewels for setting, in carving wood, and to work in all manner of artistic workmanship.

34 "And He has put in his heart the ability to teach, in him and Aholiab the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan. 35 He has filled them with skill to do all manner of work of the engraver and the designer and the tapestry maker, in blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine linen, and of the weaver—those who do every work and those who design artistic works.

2. Worldly patterns of thinking

1 Cor 2:13-14

And this is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom, but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. 14The natural man does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God. For they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

This demonstrates that your mind has not been renewed by God's patterns.

It undermines God's role in your life

God's alternative

Romans 12:1-2

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—this is your true and proper worship. 2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect.

So the starting point is giving over yourself to the Lord and the fruit of that must be deliverance from worldly patterns and renewed thinking. A lot of Christians are trying to walk in holiness in specific areas of their lives but they have not yet offered God their bodies and entire selves.

When you do this you want Him to use all of you and not just parts. Your life is not compartmentalised. This is seen in the hymn, Take my life and let it be....

- **He has your mind**
- **He has your heart**

- He has your words
- He has your hands
- He has your body
- He has your eyes

3. No consultation with God

Isaiah 8:19 NIV

When someone tells you to consult mediums and spiritists, who whisper and mutter, should not a people inquire of their God? Why consult the dead on behalf of the living?

New Living Translation

Someone may say to you, "Let's ask the mediums and those who consult the spirits of the dead. With their whisperings and mutterings, they will tell us what to do." But shouldn't people ask God for guidance? Should the living seek guidance from the dead?

I believe that when a nation does not acknowledge God in His holiness the people open themselves up to demonic counsel. Nations experience judgment.

Do you consult God and see Him as the source of wisdom. This can happen through godly biblically based counsel. When you don't, by default you open yourself up to demonic counsel.

God's Alternative

Committing your affairs to God

Proverbs 16:3

Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and he will establish your plans.

New Living Translation

Commit your actions to the LORD, and your plans will succeed.

English Standard Version

Commit your work to the LORD, and your plans will be established.

What are your works? What are your plans? If you don't have plans then what can be established? (Artwork, building etc)

What things do you need to commit to God?

Money, family, plans, your body, your time etc

Committing is a process of returning to a stewardship mentality.