

Some are suitable to our inclinations and interests; others are contrary to both. In some we may please Christ and please ourselves, as when He requires us to feed and clothe ourselves. Indeed, there are some spiritual duties that are more pleasing than others; as to rejoice in the Lord, to bless and praise God. These are the sweet works of a Christian.

But then there are other works. In these we cannot please Christ except by denying ourselves, as in enduring the sins and shortcomings of others, reproving others for their sins, withdrawing from their company; as in witnessing against their wickedness. Confessing Christ and His name is never easy when it costs us shame and ridicule. It is never easy to sail against the wind, swim against the tide, surrender our rights and privileges because Jesus Christ is our Lord.

See what it is that Christ expects and then yield yourselves to His whole will. Do not think of making your own terms with Christ; that will never be allowed. Let us now approach Christ in prayer.

COVENANT PRAYER

Lord Jesus, if You will receive me into Your house, if You will but accept me as Your servant, I will not stand upon terms. Impose on me whatever condition pleases You; write down Your own provisions; command me to be or do whatever You will; only let me be Your servant.

Make me what You will, Lord, and set me where You will. Let me be a vessel of silver or gold, or a vessel of wood or stone; so I may be a vessel of honor. I am content. If I am not the head, or the eye, or the ear, one of the nobler and more honorable instruments You will employ, let me be the hand, or the foot, as one of the lowest and least esteemed of all the servants of my Lord.

Lord, put me on whatever task You will; rank me with whom You will. Put me to doing; put me to suffering. Let me be employed for You, or laid aside for You, exalted for You, or trodden under foot for You. Let me be full; let me be empty. Let me have all things; let me have nothing. I freely and heartily resign all to Your pleasure and disposal.

LEADER: Friends, such a commitment to Christ as you have now made is the essence of Christianity. When you have chosen God to be your portion and happiness; when you have laid all your hopes on Christ, casting yourself wholly upon the merits of His righteousness; when you have thoughtfully and heartily resigned and given up yourselves to Him; then you are Christians indeed, and never till then. Christ will be the Savior of none but of His servants. He is the Author of eternal salvation to those who obey Him. Christ will have no servants but by consent. His people are a willing people, and Christ will accept of no consent but in full to all that He requires. He will be all in all, or He will be nothing.

THE COVENANT

LEADER: Search your hearts whether you either have already, or can now freely, make this commitment to God in Christ. First, consider what your sins are and examine whether you can resolve to forego them all.

Consider what His laws are — how holy, strict, and spiritual, and whether you can, upon deliberation, choose them all as the rule of your whole life. Second, compose your spirits into the most serious frame possible, suitable to a transaction of so high importance. Third, lay hold on the covenant of God and rely upon His promise of giving grace and strength, for only through these will you be enabled to perform your promise. Do not trust your own strength, but take hold on His strength. Fourth, resolve to be faithful. Having engaged your hearts, opened your mouths, and subscribed with your hands to the Lord, resolve in His strength never to go back. Fifth and last, being thus prepared, in the most solemn manner possible, as if the Lord were visibly present before your eyes, bow and open your hearts to the Lord.