

# KEPT FOR THE MASTER'S USE

by

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## CHAPTER TWELVE

### OUR SELVES KEPT FOR JESUS

“Keep my self, that I may be  
Ever, only, all for Thee.”

“FOR THEE!” That is the Beginning and the end of the whole matter of consecration. There was a prelude to its endless song—a prelude whose theme is woven into every following harmony in the new anthem of consecrated life: “**The Son of God who loved me, and gave Himself for me.**” Out of the realized “**for me**” grows the practical “for Thee”! If the former is a living root, the latter will be its living fruit.

“For Thee!” This makes the difference between forced or formal, and therefore unreasonable service, and the reasonable service, which is the beginning of the perfect service where they see His face. This makes the difference between slave work and free work. For Thee, my Redeemer; for Thee, who hast spoken to my heart; for Thee, who hast done for me—what?

Let us each pause, and fill up that blank with the great things the Lord hath done for us. For Thee, who art to me—what? Fill that up, too, before Him. For Thee, my Saviour Jesus, my Lord and my God!

And what is to be for Him? Myself. We talk sometimes as if, whatever else could be subdued unto Him, self could never be. Did Paul forget to mention this important exception to the “**all things**” in Philippians 3:21? David said: “**Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His Holy Name.**” Did he, too, unaccountably forget to mention that he only meant all that was within him, except self? If not, then self must be among the “**all things**” which the Lord Jesus Christ is able to subdue unto Himself, and which are to bless His Holy Name.

It is self which, once His most treacherous foe, is now, by full and glad surrender, His own soldier—coming over from the rebel camp into the royal army. It is not someone else, some temporarily possessing spirit, which says within us, “**Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee,**” but our true and very self, only changed and renewed by the power of the Holy Ghost. And when we do that we would not, we know that “**it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.**”

Our true self is the new self, taken and won by the love of God, and kept by the power of God.

Yes, “kept”! There is the promise on which we ground our prayer; or, rather, one of the promises. For, search and look for your own strengthening and comfort, and you will find it repeated in every part of the Bible, from “**I am with thee, and will keep thee,**” in Genesis, to “**I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation,**” in Revelation.

And kept for Him! Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, when it is only the fulfilling of His own eternal purpose in creating us? “**This people have I formed for Myself**” Not ultimately only, but presently and continually; for He says, “**Thou shalt abide for Me**”; and, “**He that remaineth, even he shall be for our God.**”

Are you one of His people by faith in Jesus Christ? Then see what you are to Him. You, personally and individually, are part of the Lord’s portion (Deuteronomy 32:9) and of His inheritance (I Kings 8:53, and Ephesians 1:18f. His portion and inheritance would not be complete without you. You are His peculiar treasure (Exodus 19:5); a special people (how warm, and loving, and natural that expression is!) “**unto Himself**” (Deuteronomy 7:6).

Would you call it “**keeping,**” if you had a special treasure, a darling little child, for instance, and let it run wild into all sorts of dangers all day long, sometimes at your side, and sometimes out in the street, with only the intention of fetching it safe home at night? If ye then, being evil, would know better and do better than that, how much more shall our Lord’s keeping be true, and tender, and continual, and effectual, when He declares us to be His peculiar treasure, purchased (see I Peter 2:9, margin) for Himself at such unknown cost!

He will keep what thus He sought.  
Safely guard the dearly-bought;  
Cherish that which He did choose,  
Always love and never lose.

I know what some of us are thinking. “Yes; I see it all plainly enough in theory, but in practice I find I am not kept Self goes over to the other camp again and again. It is not all for Jesus, though I have asked and wished for it to be so.”

Dear friends, the all must be sealed with only. Are you willing to be only for Jesus? You have not given all to Jesus while you are not quite ready to be only for Him. And it is no use to talk about ever while we have not settled the only and the all. You cannot be for Him, in the full and blessed sense, while you are partly for anything or anybody else. For the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for Himself. You see, the “**for Himself**” hinges upon the “**set apart.**”

There is no consecration without separation.

If you are mourning over want of realized consecration, will you look humbly and sincerely into this point? “**A garden enclosed is My sister, My spouse,**” saith the Heavenly Bridegroom.

Set Apart for Jesus!  
Is not this enough,  
Though the desert prospect  
Open wild and rough?  
Set apart for His delight,  
Chosen for His holy pleasure,  
Sealed to be His special treasure.  
Could we choose a nobler joy?—and would we if we might.

But yielding, by His grace, to this blessed setting apart for Himself, the Lord shall establish thee a holy people unto Himself, as He hath sworn unto thee. Can there be a stronger promise? Just obey and trust His word now, and yield yourselves now unto God, that He may establish thee to-day for a people unto Himself. Commit the keeping of your souls to Him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator, being persuaded that He is able to keep that which you commit to Him.

Now, Lord, I give myself to Thee,  
I would be wholly Thine,  
As Thou hast given Thyself to me,  
And Thou art wholly Mine;  
O take me, seal me for Thine own.  
Thine altogether, Thine alone.

Here comes in once more that immeasurably important subject of our influence. For it is not what we say or do, so much as what we are, that influences others. We have heard this, and very likely repeated it again and again, but have we seen it to be inevitably linked with the great question of this chapter? I do not know anything which, thoughtfully considered, makes us realize more vividly the need and the importance of our whole selves being kept for Jesus. Any part not wholly committed, and not wholly kept, must hinder and neutralize the real influence for Him of all the rest. If we ourselves are kept all for Jesus, then our influence will be all kept for Him too. If not, then, however much we may wish and talk and try, we cannot throw our full weight into the right scale. And just in so far as it is not in the one scale, it must be in the other; weighing against the little which we have tried to put in the right one, and making the short weight still shorter.

So large a proportion of it is entirely involuntary, while yet the responsibility of it is so enormous, that our helplessness comes out in exceptionally strong relief, while our past debt in this matter is simply incalculable. Are we feeling this a little? Getting just a glimpse, down the misty defiles of memory, of the neutral influence, the wasted influence, the mistaken influence, the actually wrong influence which has marked the ineffaceable although untraceable course? And all the while we owed Him all that influence! It ought to have been all for Him!

We have nothing to say. But what has our Lord to say? **“I forgave thee all that debt!”**

Then, after that forgiveness which must come first, there comes a thought of great comfort in our freshly felt helplessness, rising out of the very thing that makes us realize this helplessness.

Just because our influence is to such a great extent involuntary and unconscious, we may rest assured that if we ourselves are truly kept for Jesus, this will be, as a quite natural result, kept for Him also. It cannot be otherwise, for as is the fountain so will be the flow; as the spring, so the action; as the impulse, so the communicated motion. Thus there may be, and in simple trust there will be, a quiet rest about it, a relief from all sense of strain and effort, a fulfilling of the words, **“For he that is entered into His rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His.”** It will not be a matter of trying to have good influence, but just of having it, as naturally and constantly as the magnetized bar.

Another encouraging thought should follow. Of ourselves we may have but little weight, no particular talents or position or anything else to put into the scale; but let us remember that again and again God has shown that the influence of a very average life, when once really consecrated to Him, may outweigh that of almost any number of merely professing Christians.

Such lives are like Gideon’s three hundred, carrying not even the ordinary weapons of war, but only trumpets and lamps and empty pitchers, by whom the Lord wrought great deliverance, while He did not use the others at all, **“for He hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.”**

Should not all this be additional motive for desiring that our whole selves should be taken and kept?

I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever. Therefore we may rejoicingly say “ever” as well as “only” and “all for Thee”! For the Lord is our Keeper, and He is the Almighty and the Everlasting God, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. He will never change His mind about keeping us and no man is able to pluck us out of His hand. Neither will Christ let us pluck ourselves out of His hand, for He says, **“thou shalt abide for Me many days.”**

And He that keepeth us will not slumber. Once having undertaken His vineyard, He will keep it night and day, till all the days and nights are over, and we know the full meaning of the salvation ready to be revealed in the last time, unto which we are kept by His power.

And then, forever for Him! Passing from the gracious keeping by faith for this little while, to the glorious keeping in His presence for all eternity! Forever fulfilling the object for which He formed us and chose us, we showing forth His praise, and He showing the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us in the ages to come! He for us, and we for Him forever!

Oh, how little we can grasp this! Yet this is the fruition of being “kept for Jesus”!

~ end of chapter 12 ~

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