

Giving Up Our Right To Be Right

We like to be in charge. We often don't like to let other people have the last word, win the race, be first in line, or come up with a better idea than us. We want to be right. We want to be in control. And yet, it seems that when we impose our point of view on others or elbow our way through life that we often feel alone and ashamed. We lose the joy that results from depending on God and taking direction from Him. God wants to help us give up control so we can live in joy.

Do not be afraid; you will not suffer shame. Do not fear disgrace; you will not be humiliated.
(Isaiah 54)

"I could be wrong." "I'm not sure." "Maybe I made a mistake." "That's a point I hadn't considered before." Imagine the sense of well-being we could have if we were willing to give away our right to be right. What a weight off our shoulders! This selfless act might be overlooked by others. It might go unacknowledged for a time. It might even look a little crazy. Giving up being right does not require that anyone else approve or even notice. We do it for ourself even more than for another. We do it so we can welcome the input of another into our life. We do it so we can gain the strength of character that comes by allowing another to offer their gift and their insight. Even when we are absolutely sure we know what to do, how to do it, and where to do it, we could be wrong. Someone else might know more or have a better idea, a more interesting perspective, or a more workable plan.

Does it really matter which way we take to the meeting as long as we get there safely? Is it essential to do the dishes or clean the carpet in just one way? Could someone do it differently and it still work? Must our way of doing things be the only way or could we release these things to others and in the process learn something new. Sometimes we are control freaks. We hold onto our positions and our way of doing things until we are tense and irritable. But when we finally let go and welcome the involvement or the process of another person,

we are relieved. It can actually feel good to let someone else take over. We can actually learn new ways of thinking and acting.

Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life. (1 Timothy 6)

Giving up our rights can be a source of joy too. It can be as simple as giving up the right of way at a street corner or in a store line-up. Even though it's your turn next and you're in a hurry too, step aside and let the other person go first. You might be surprised at how serene and truly joyful you can feel.

The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life, of whom shall I be afraid. (Psalm 27)

When God begins to speak to us and to show us His ways, they often look different than the ways we have been living life. As we begin to reshape our priorities and our understandings of life according to God's word, we begin to notice that we might be wrong. There might be things we didn't know about life and the possibilities God is calling us towards. God has good plans for our life, plans to prosper us and not to harm us. Only God knows how to put all the pieces of our lives and relationships together so we can experience the fullness God intends for us. God invites us to trust Him that His way and His time and His plan for us is right.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not unto your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your paths (Proverbs 3)

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