

# “Give Me” or “Make Me”?

Joe Slater

We sing, “Have Thine own way, Lord.” I think sometimes we should change the words to “Have mine own way!” Jesus taught that true spirituality centers around submission and service; but modern religion has opted for self-will and being served.

In the parable of the lost son (Luke 15), the young rebel demanded: “Give me the portion of goods that falls to me” (v. 12). His “give me” mentality was far from unique; indeed, it is alive and well today. Give me what I want, or I’ll go down the street to a church that will! Legion are those who are choosing churches based not on where they can best serve God faithfully, but where they themselves will be served as they wish. Give me entertainment; give me day care; give me emotional gratification.

Eventually the lost son came to his senses in the hog pen. Humbled, he thought to himself: “I will arise and to go my father, and I will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants’” (vv. 18, 19). What a difference! No longer did he arrogantly demand, “Give me . . . ,” but meekly asked his father to “make me . . . .”

Change comes from within. The son first thought he needed freedom and a change in financial status. In reality, he needed a change in attitude and the true liberty of submission to a loving father.

Think about it! Aren’t those our needs, too? Only when we abandon the “give me” mentality, and submit to God, saying, “Make me what You want me to be” – only then are we fit to be His children. As the song says, “Mold me and make me after Thy will, while I am waiting, yielded and still.”

Friend, what shall it be with you? “Give me,” or “Make me”?

## Obedient Servants

Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death or of obedience leading to righteousness? But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness (Romans 6:16-18).

Centuries ago a farmer noticed a group of men on horses riding in his direction. He had one field that he did not want them riding over, so he sent a servant boy to the field, telling him to shut the gate, to watch it, and under no circumstances to let it be opened!

The men on horses came up and ordered that the gate be opened. The servant boy explained his orders and refused to open the gate. After some argument, one of the men said in a stern voice, “My boy, you do not know me. I am the Duke of Wellington, and I command you to open the gate!”

The boy took off his hat in respect for the famous hero of Waterloo, but humbly answered: “I am sure the Duke of Wellington would not wish me to disobey orders. I must keep this gate shut and not let anyone pass until I get my master’s permission.” The famous general then lifted his own hat to the boy and said, “I honor the boy or man who cannot be frightened into doing wrong.” He then rode off in the opposite direction.

Our Lord expects us to be obedient servants. He said, “If you love Me, keep My commandments” (John 14:15). The inspired apostle Paul wrote, “If anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him” (2 Thessalonians 3:14). The apostles said, “We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29).

We must be obedient servants!

--Cecil Burch (Angel Fire, NM), via *Old Paths*

## What’s On Your Mind?

But his delight is in the Law of the Lord, and in His Law he mediates day and night (Psalm 1:2).

What dominates your thinking? Is it pleasure, sex, how evil the world is, preparing for a worldly doomsday, or worry? Perhaps you think about a TV show or some other form of entertainment. What is on your mind in the dark?

Jesus warned that what is in a man's heart, or rather mind, is what defiles him (Matthew 15:18-19). We understand that leaven changes dough. Jesus uses the idea of leavening in many lessons as having an effect on people. We read of this principle in I Corinthians 5:6b and 7a, “Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough? Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump.”

Are you putting in your mind the leaven of the world or the leaven of Jesus? Jesus spoke of a man having an unclean spirit removed. This man put nothing in the place once occupied by the unclean spirit. The unclean spirit returned and brought in seven more even worse spirits (Matthew 12:43-45).

Think back to when you became a Christian and how much you wanted that new, clean life. Are you one of those who struggle between the world and Jesus? You may even have tried to remove worldly thoughts from your mind, but they keep coming back.

Have you put the word of God into your mind so that you can mediate on them day and night? There is no magic formula that can change you. It takes continually being in God's word so that we can “take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ” (II Corinthians 10:5b). As Philippians 4:8 says, we are to dwell only on good things.

What's on your mind?

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