

Making Ought To's Into Want To's

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake from Internet Sources)

Introduction:

- A. Heb. 8:8-10
- B. Christians need to perform their duties: attendance, Bible study, prayer, offering, personal evangelism, going to work, cleaning the house, raising children, caring for aging parents, bearing with weak and erring brethren
 - 1. The difficulty in this is that our duties are not always our desires.
 - 2. And so, preachers must repeatedly admonish, elders must often rebuke, and family members have to constantly chide to get us to do what we ought to do
 - 3. When our duties become our desires, when our ought to's become our want to's, this will all become unnecessary.
 - 4. So how do we turn our responsibilities into our pleasures?

I. GOD WANTS HIS LAW WRITTEN ON OUR HEARTS

- A. Throughout the Old Testament, God's law was written in stone rather than in the hearts of his people - Ex. 31:18, 34:1
- B. It was not His will that it stay on the stones
 - 1. Ex. 24:12; Psalm 40:8-10; Matt. 15:8-9, 23:23
- C. Today, it is God's will that His law be written on our hearts
 - 1. 2Cor. 3:3; Ez. 36:26; Rom. 6:17
 - 2. Our hearts need to be changed so that we desire to do what God wants us to do.

II. THIS IS THE ONLY TRUE MEANS TO A HAPPY AND FULFILLING LIFE

- A. It has been said that the way to happiness is to keep your needs simple and your wants few. It is good, but it falls short. A Chinese proverb states:
 - 1. "If you want happiness for an hour — take a nap.
If you want happiness for a day — go fishing.
If you want happiness for a year — inherit a fortune.
If you want happiness for a lifetime — help someone else."
- B. There is a better way: The way to happiness is to conform your want to's to God's ought to's for you.
 - 1. Make a list of your duties to God, and then make a list of your personal desires, and lay them side by side
 - 2. This can indicate why you are happy as a Christian, if the two lists are very similar
 - 3. If they are very different, it can explain why you may be unhappy as a Christian and view your duty to God as a great burden

III. GOD'S WILL WAS CHRIST'S DESIRE

- A. Every desire Christ had was in accordance with God's will
 - 1. John 8:28-29, 14:9

IV. HOW MY DUTIES CAN BECOME MY DESIRES

- A. First, accept that changing your desires and what makes you happy can be done by every human being
 - 1. Paul changed his desires by choosing Christ - Phil. 3:4-9; Gal. 2:20
 - 2. It begins with making a determined choice - Jer. 9:23-24
- B. Next, start practicing your duties, whether or not it is your desire
 - 1. Psalm 116:10-14; Ecc. 2:15; Isa. 38:9-17
 - 2. Our desires are changeable, even fickle, and often uninformed
- C. Read your Bible to know what your duties are.
 - 1. 2Tim. 2:15; 2Peter 1:10; Matt. 13:51-52
- D. Pray for help with the acceptance, with the practice, with the change in your desires, with the learning of your duty
 - 1. It is hard to dislike the will of God while we are praying to Him.
 - 2. Psalm 51:10, 12

Conclusion:

- A. With determination and God's help, our duties can become our desires. When that happens, we will find life so much more fulfilling and serving God will be so much more meaningful and joyful to us