

Volume 4, Day 30: "I am a Christian but I still have my rights!"

I cannot count how many times I expressed those words. And worse yet, the number of times I acted on those words even when they were not verbalized. Maybe you know someone who also believes those words.

One day as I was screaming silently that I have my rights, the Holy Spirit brought to my remembrance that Jesus never expressed that thought. He also never acted as though He had any rights at all.

I began to reread the Gospels and ponder the actions and words of Jesus. I wasn't surprised to notice that Jesus gave up His rights the moment He entered our world. He emptied Himself of His rights, in order to become an example for us of serving His Father's purpose rather than His own. And that purpose is "...that none should perish, but that all should come to repentance." 2 Peter 3:9

The longer I meditated on the concept of giving up what is **rightfully** mine (rights given to me by God Himself), the more convicted I felt. Jesus, the Only Begotten Son of God, gave up the very thing each of us must give up in order to receive God's salvation. I repented of my wrong belief, that I could be a Christian and still have my rights. I gave up my rights (to be in control of my own destiny) and gave them back to God.

The most amazing changes occurred in my soul each time I surrendered another right to God. Ultimately I realized that this is one of the keys to a life of peace. In retrospect, I could see how insisting on **having it my way (my rights)** had been, and always would be the source of conflict between me and others. My rights created expectations of others that were rarely met. And unmet expectations always made me angry.

As my beliefs changed, one by one, my love, joy and peace increased. As I began to move downward in order to lift others up on my back, I saw clearly how Jesus' humility saves.