

# The Brown Street Beacon

*"...Shine out among them like beacon lights,  
holding out to them the Word of Life" (Phil 2:15-16)*



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## Who Control You?

**W**ho is in control of your life? There are many forces in the world that vie for control over our lives. The question is, who do we give it to? As Christians, the answer should be Jesus. Jesus will never force His will upon us or in any way try to coerce us into obeying Him. However, Jesus does want us to voluntarily relinquish our will to His will. He doesn't want us to be His slaves, but He does want us to freely serve Him. This is why Jesus came to this earth. He came to save us by freeing us from the slavery of sin and make us His voluntary servants. Paul was referring to this when he wrote the following:

*"Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men" (Ephesians 4:8).*

After Jesus ascended back to the Father, and the gospel was preached on the day of Pentecost, those captive to sin were set free when they heard and obeyed the gospel of Christ. Those same people, set free from the law of sin (Romans 7:23), became servants of Christ, and such has been the case with every person who has ever obeyed the gospel. Listen to Romans 6:17-18.

*"But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."*

Now, to truly be a servant of Christ is to allow Him to guide you in life and direct your steps. Being a servant of Christ means you surrender control to Him. Read Galatians 2:20 and see whether or not this is what Paul did.

Is Jesus your heavenly Master? Who is in control of your life? Too many times we turn control over to someone or something other than Jesus.

Sometimes we take control. If pleasing self overrides everything else in life, you have taken the reins out of the hands of Jesus and taken them into your own hands. When you make decisions in life, do you first think about what you want and what will make you happy, or do you first consider what Jesus would have you to do? How you honestly answer that question will go a long way in revealing who is in control of your life—Jesus or you.

Sometimes we relinquish control of our lives to our peers. Not a few bad decisions have been made by people who have been pressured by their peers. Many have done things that they know to be wrong because they get too caught up in wanting to make their friends happy. All of a sudden they are being controlled by a desire to be popular, which in turn necessitates compromising

values and giving in to the unscrupulous whims of those who are a part of the “in-crowd.” This isn’t new. In the days of Jesus, some of the Jewish leaders knew the right thing to do was to follow Jesus, but they wouldn’t do it because they allowed themselves to be controlled by the people around them (John 12:42-43).

Sometimes people give control to drugs or alcohol. It’s a shame that we live in a society where drugs and alcohol are so accessible. There are new drugs popping up all the time. Just today I heard the tail end of a story about a new drug called “cheese” on the streets. It is being called the new crack. Since I only heard a few seconds of the news report, I don’t know much about this new drug. But I do know this: many lives will be ruined, many crimes will be committed and many families will be destroyed over this new drug. Why? Because many will relinquish control of their lives and hearts to it. Listen young people! Stay away from drugs and alcohol. I don’t care how many people you know who dabble just a little in it. Don’t ever experiment with them. Don’t ever get started just to be cool. Your first drink, sniff, puff, or shot can be the one that causes you to lose control. Take the advice of the scriptures. Eleven times in the New Testament we are exhorted to be sober, i.e., to be of a sound mind. Don’t give that up for anyone.

There are other things that we give control to as well (money, occupation, recreation, etc.). Don’t let any of these things control you. Follow Jesus and let Him have control. He will lead you to good decisions now and eternal life after a while.

*Don*

## Put Your Finger on the Passage



**T**hose who have heard me preach have often heard me say, “put your finger on the passage!” I may be challenging someone associated with a denominational church to prove what they preach or practice by the scriptures, or I may be asserting the fact that at the church of which I am a member, we can provide book, chapter and verse for all that we say or do. The importance of this is seen in the need for Bible authority (Colossians 3:17).

To do something in the name of the Lord is to do it by His power or authority (Acts 4:7-10). Paul tells us that whatever we do in word (whatever we teach) or deed (whatever we practice), it must be done by Jesus’ authority. Where is the authority of Christ found? It is found in the New Testament. The New Testament is composed of inspired epistles that were written by men who were moved by the Holy Spirit (John 16:13), and who spoke in the place of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:20). When Paul, for example, wrote something, it was not simply his opinion, it was the commandment of the Lord (1 Corinthians 14:37). The Bible is the place, then, that we must turn to in order to find out what the will of God is. Since we are under the law of Christ, we must turn, for authority in religious matters, to the New Testament where that law is found .

Does your church call the preacher Reverend? Put your finger on the passage! Does your church teach aerobic classes or engage in other recreational activities? Put your finger on the passage! Does your church use musical instruments in worship services? Put your finger on the passage! Does your church have a gymnasium for the purpose of fun and frolic? Put your finger on the

passage!

Why not find a church that can put their collective finger on the passage that authorizes everything they preach and practice? Visit the Brown Street church of Christ and see if we aren't such a church. Are we a perfect church? No, there is no such thing. But we do strive to live according to the gospel of Christ, and all the while we make sure that we can put our finger on the passage that authorizes all that we do. Come check us out. You'll be our honored guest!

*Don*