

I Am Not My Own
by Jack Hyles

Back in the days when most everybody who traveled great distances traveled by train, a Christian layman was sitting with three other men who were traveling together. During the train ride, one man pulled out a deck of cards, began to shuffle them, and said, "Let's play cards."

The second man said, "Wonderful, wonderful"

The third man said, "Good."

The fourth man said nothing. One of the fellows said to him, "Would you like to play cards?"

The Christian layman said, "Yes, I would." The cards were shuffled and dealt. The Christian just sat there motionless.

He was asked, "Aren't you going to play?" He replied, "I can't."

"Well, you said you wanted to."

"I do."

"Well, why don't you play?"

The man said, "I have no hands."

"Oh," said one of the men, "I did not know that you are an amputee."

"I'm not," was his answer. "I'm a Christian. I'd love to play cards. I'd like to join you, but these hands are not mine. They belong to Someone else, and He does not want to use them to play cards. I have no hands of my own."

What a truth! Do you know that all unhappiness is caused by one word—anarchy? When a person does not yield himself to God he is unhappy. The unhappy child is one who is so unfortunate as to grow up in a home under Dr. Spock's philosophy. Happy is the child who is taught that what Dad says and what Mom says is what goes! Why? He is not his own.

You say, "Brother Hyles, I am a little child. How can I belong to God and my mom and dad? How can God own my body and my mom and dad own my body?"

God does own you when your mom and dad own you. You obey God when you obey Mom and Dad. The happy child is the child who says, "I am not my own. I belong to those who are over me."

The unhappy bride is that young lady who does not want to give herself in complete obedience to her groom. The unhappy citizen is that citizen who says, "I will do what I want to do. I will disregard the laws. I will have nothing but my own convictions reigning over me."

The unhappy student is the student who will not obey the teacher. The unhappy Christian is the Christian who will not obey his God.

Listen to me tonight. Listen to me, beloved. You will never be happy in the Christian life until you come to the place where you say, "Dear Lord, I have no eyes; they are your eyes; they are not mine."

A Christian should say, "I have no ears; they are His ears. My eyes are His eyes. My hands are His hands."

I got this truth years ago before I went into the army. One time they called me up and said, "Hyles, listen, would you like to go down to the dance at the armory?"

I said, "I'd love to."

They said, "We'll pick you up."

"No, I'm not going," I said.

"Why?" the fellows asked.

"Because I don't have any feet."

"Oh, what happened to your feet?"

"I haven't had any feet for seven years. My feet are His. I am not my own. I am bought with a price."

Kids, you will never be happy until you take your hands off of your life and say, "I am His. My feet belong to Him. My eyes belong to Him." That will solve your bad literature. That will solve your dancing at school. That will solve your cursing. That will solve your dirty language. That will solve your suggestive speech. That will solve your rock music. That will solve it all. You ought to say, "These cars are not mine; they are His. I have no right to hear what I want to hear. I must hear what He would want to hear. They are His ears. I have no right to say what I want to say. I want to say what He would want me to say. My tongue is His. I have no right to go where I want to go. I must go where He wants me to go. My feet are His. I have no right to take what I want to take."

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I must take what He would want to take. My hands are His. I have no right to say what I want to say, be what I want to be, do what I want to do, go where I want to go or see what I want to see. I belong to Him. I am not my own!"

All your problems tonight, men, women, teenagers, boys and girls, revolve around one thing: You are taking Somebody else's members and using them for your own pleasure.

Suppose I said tonight, "You are going to drink whiskey."

You say, "But, Preacher, I have never tasted whiskey. I don't want any whiskey."

"Well, you are going to have it whether you want it or not. I will pry your mouth open and pour it down."

Let me ask you a question? Is that right?

You say, "Of course, it is not right! This mouth is mine and this stomach is mine."

That is the reason the Apostle Paul could say in I Corinthians 10:31, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." Why? This is His mouth, not mine. These are His eyes, not mine. These are His ears, not mine. These are His hands, not mine. These are His feet, not mine.

All of your problems, your unhappy days, your frustrations, your nervous breakdowns, your burdens, the things that make you unhappy, and all of your maladjustment is wrapped up in one problem: You are using Somebody else's members and doing what you want to with them. You are a thief!

I have given just enough of myself to Christ that I realize that I belong to Him. I am His. I am not my own. I have no right to choose what I do. I have no right to decide where I go. I have no right to decide what I eat or drink. I have no right to decide what I read. I have no right to decide what I hear. I must hear only that which He would hear; these are His ears. I must see only that which He would see; these are His eyes. I must go only where He would go; these are His feet. I must take only what He would take; these are His hands. All of my problems and all of yours are wrapped up around the rebellion of taking the members that belong to Him and using them for ourselves.

I was on maneuvers one day in the army. We had to walk 26 miles. We were 13 miles out and had 13 miles to come back. I was so thirsty, and my canteen was dry! A man came with a big truck and said, "We have something for you to drink: a big case of beer." There was no water, only beer.

I looked at that beer and said, "You sure look good. I sure would like to have you.

You say, "Preacher, have you ever wanted to take a drink?"

Sure, I wanted to take a drink.

"Why didn't you?"

I didn't have a mouth. I don't have one now; the one I use is His.

Sometimes I would like to criticize people, but I can't; I don't have a tongue. I would like to make money, but I can't; I don't have any hands. Sometimes I would like to fight, but I can't; I don't have a fist.

Beloved members of First Baptist Church, grasp this truth tonight: You are not your own. **YOU ARE NOT YOUR OWN.**

A young lady came into my office not long ago to talk about her future. She was a senior in high school. She said, "What I want to do is this!"

I said, "You have no choice in the matter. You cannot do what you want to do."

She said, "I can do what I want to do!"

I said, "You have no right to do what you want to do. You are not your own."

I. I Am Not My Own Because He Created Me.

I am His because twice He created me. In Genesis in the story of creation we find that He created our bodies. He took the dust of the earth and from that dust He created man. He spoke and we came into existence. He made these eyes; they are His. He made these hands; they are His. He made this body; it is His. He made these feet; they are His. He made this mouth; it is His. He made these ears; they are His. He made me, and I am His because of creation.

I am His because of another creation. In II Corinthians 5:17 it says, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature (creation)." So I am His twice.

Years ago I made a slingshot. I went out to a big tree. I found a limb that had a fork in the branch. I sawed it off. I got my knife and whittled it. Then I took some sandpaper and sanded it. I found an old inner tube and cut off two rubber bands. I tied some string on the ends of the rubber bands. I put a piece of leather on the end of the twine. I tied a couple of strings to the ends of the branch and put the rubber on the end of the strings. Then I put the strings on the back of the rubber and I put leather on the

back of the strings. I went down to the gravel pit and got a sack full of rocks, and I had a slingshot!

Across the street from me there was a kid named Robert. He was the meanest kid I ever met. He saw my slingshot. He took it. I saw him with it the next day at school. I went to the teacher and said, "Teacher, Robert has my slingshot."

She asked, "How do you know it's yours?"

I said, "I made it. It's mine!"

Robert said, "Finders keepers; losers weepers." Big bully!

I said, "Robert, that's mine. I made it."

The teacher said, "What proof do you have?"

I said, "Well, I . . ." Then I said, "Robert, whose is that?"

He said, "It's mine."

I said, "You know it's not yours! I made that!"

After school, he got me and beat me to a pulp. (The big bully was three or four years older than I was.)

It wasn't long until I made a scooter. Did you ever make a scooter? First, you find an old pair of skates. Then get a two-by-four. Attach the skates under the two-by-four making a set of wheels in the front and a set in the back. How many of you ever made an old scooter like that? God pity you young folks who buy scooters. Then you put a one-by-four in the front, build some handles, and you have a scooter.

One day I saw Robert on my scooter. I said, "Hey, Robert, that's my scooter!"

He said, "No, it's not. It's my scooter!"

"No, it's mine. I made that."

"Finders keepers, losers weepers."

"Robert, that's mine." I went in and I told my mother. "Mama, Robert has my scooter!"

Mama said, "Why don't you just go get it?"

"Because I can't! He's bigger than I am."

"Well, how do you know it's yours?"

"I made it myself; it's mine."

Robert beat me up again!

It wasn't long before I made what we called a "roller coaster." I got some old tricycle wheels, built an engine hood, and made a soapbox car. Down the hill I would go. After spending several weeks building my car, one day I looked out and saw Robert in my little soapbox car. I said, "ROBERT!"

"WHAT?"

"That's mine.

"Finders keepers, losers weepers."

"Robert, that's mine." I went back home and told my dad. I said, "Robert has whipped me three times because I wanted things that I had made. I made the slingshot, the scooter and the soapbox. They are mine. I made them!"

Dad said, "Why don't you sort of let Robert know who's boss?"

I said, "He already knows, and I do too!"

Dad looked out in the backyard. There was a good-sized two-by-four. Dad said, "That might make you the boss." Though my dad was not a Christian, he always taught me that a man will not let anybody push him around. He wanted me to keep my manhood, anyway. I got that two-by-four and carried it behind me everywhere I went. One day Robert got my bicycle. That did it! He said, "Finders keepers, losers weepers" long enough! He came by the house, looked at me and said, "Hey, I got you now!" He decided he was going to get off and whip me for the fourth time. I took that two-by-four and threw it at Robert. As he turned around, it hit him right in the back!

That is sort of crude, but you know, that is exactly what God does. God says, "You are not your own. I made you. Those are My hands; I made them."

"But I'll play cards, and I'll gamble, and I'll grasp the liquor bottle and I'll have my hands touch things that are unholy."

God says, "I made those hands."

"Finders keepers, losers weepers."

We use them like we want to use them. We trod unholy paths and go unholy places.

God says, "I made those feet. They are My feet. They are not yours.

We say, "Finders keepers, losers weepers."

This is why you ladies ought to wear your skirts down to your knees. Those are not your thighs you are showing. They are His. He has a right to tell you how to dress. You have no right to expose your body to the lustful eyes and evil minds of wicked men. Your body is His. You are His. You are not your own.

The day will come, ladies and gentlemen, when He will say, "Okay, I'll get a two-by-four and knock the fire out of you." You will hear the squeaking of brakes on the pavement or you will feel a pain in the chest, and you will be rushed by ambulance to the hospital. Then the Lord will say, "You have used My hands

long enough; I will take them. You have used My feet long enough; I will still them. You have used My tongue long enough; I will hush it. You have used my eyes long enough; I will shut them. You have used My body long enough."

You won't get by, Christian friend, on being your own. You are His!

I am not my own because He created me.

II. I Am Not My Own Because I Was Born to Him.

I was born to God's family. That which is born to you is yours until it is grown. So I am His until I mature. I am His until I am grown. I am His until I am no longer a minor. That means until I become grown in the Lord I have no say-so over what these eyes see. Until I become grown in the Lord, I have no say-so over what these ears hear, where these feet go, what these hands do, or what this tongue speaks.

"Well," you say, "I'm already grown in the Lord."

Nobody becomes mature in the Lord until He becomes like Jesus. In Romans 8:23 God talks about "the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." There came the time in the life of a Jewish boy when he became a major and was no longer a minor. His father took him to what was called a "Bema," the great public place, the judgment place, the announcement place, the community place, the judgment seat, the nation's seat, the public speaking place, etc. He took his boy there when he became an adult. He would call all the neighborhood together, put his arm around his son, and say, "Ladies and gentlemen, I have some declarations to make. This is my son. Today he becomes a major." The son wore what was called a "toga virilis," which was a coat showing he was a minor. He would then give his son the coat worn by adults. A little boy looked forward to the day when he could exchange coats so all the people would know that he was a grown man.

Then the father would say to his son, "Son, before all these people, inherit my name. Son, before all these people, inherit all my wealth." The son then was no longer under his father. His eyes ceased to be his father's eyes; they were now his own eyes. His hands ceased to be his father's hands; they were now his own hands. His feet ceased to be his

father's feet; they were now his own feet. Now the son could decide what he would see. Now he decides what he hears. He decides where he goes. He decides what he speaks. He decides what he feels. Why? He is an adult.

When do we become adults? The Bible says we are "waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." We are not called the adults in the family of God until we "rise and seize the everlasting prize, and shout while passing through the air, 'Farewell, farewell, sweet hour of prayer.'"

I am not an adult tonight. I am Pastor of this church but I am not an adult. I am one of God's little ones. He calls me in the Bible a little child: "My little children." (I John 2:1) Now there will be a day I can decide what my own eyes see, what my own ears hear, where my own feet go, what my own hands feel and what my own tongue says. That will be on the day when I am grown. That day will come when I shall wake in His likeness and my body shall no longer be bent to sin. Then Jesus shall say, "You decide." Why? I will be like Him. Until the day when I cast aside the flesh, until the day when I am not tempted to do wrong, until the day when I am not tempted to fight back, until the day when I am not tempted to criticize, until the day when I am not tempted to lust, until the day when I am not tempted to see that which I should not see, I must look up to Him and say, "I am not my own. I am one of Your born ones.

I can recall years ago when David was a little fellow and I tried to teach him how to play ball. I said, "Now, son, you put the bat in your hand, like this. Hold the bat." David would get the bat, and I would say, "No, son, let Dad put his hands on yours." I would get over in front of him, put my left hand over his and my right hand over his, and I'd say, "Now hold it like this. When the ball comes, swing the bat." The only time he got in trouble was when he would swing it like he wanted to swing it. Time and time again he would swing that bat around and keep on swinging until the bat came right around and hit him on the back of the head. Why? He would say, "I want to do it by myself!"

That is where you get into trouble too. "I want to do it by myself." That is where you get into all your trouble.

I taught David how to box. I put the gloves on him, put my hands around his and said, "Now, box like this ... and like this ." and this! Let him have it!"

I taught David how to drive. Time and time again he would say, "I want to drive. I want to drive all by myself."

Now listen to me. Until we awake in the likeness of Jesus Christ, and our bodies are perfected and we are like Him, we had better let Him tell us where to drive. We had better let Him tell us what to see, where to go, what to say.

Oh, he careful, little eyes, what you see,
Oh, he careful, little eyes, what you see;

For the Father up above is looking down in love,
Oh, be careful, little eyes, what you see.

Oh, he careful, little ears, what you hear,
Oh, he careful, little ears, what you hear;
For the Father up above is looking down in love,
Oh, he careful, little ears, what you hear.

Oh, he careful, little tongue, what you say,
Oh, he careful, little tongue, what you say;
For the Father up above is looking down in love,
Oh, he careful, little tongue, what you say.

Oh, he careful, little feet, where you go.
Oh, he careful, little feet, where you go;
For the Father up above is looking down in love,
Oh, he careful, little feet, where you go.

The happiest Christian in this room tonight is the one who has said, "I will not go where I want to go; I will go where He wants me to go. I will not say what I want to say; I will say what He wants me to say. I will not see what I want to see; I will see what He wants me to see. I will not hear what I want to hear; I will hear what He wants me to hear.

Only to be what He wants me to be,
Every moment of every day.
Yielded completely to Jesus alone,
Every step of this pilgrim way.
Just to be clay in the Potter's hands,

Ready to do what His Word commands;
Only to be what He wants me to be,
Every moment of every day.

Why am I not my own? He created me.

Why am I not my own? I was born to Him.

III. I Am Not My Own Because He Purchased Me.

I am bought with a price. What price? The price was His own dear Son. He ransomed me. He purchased me. He paid the penalty for my sin. These hands are not mine; they have been purchased by Him. He owns them. He paid the price.

If Dr. Billings were to come to me and say, "Give me that suit of clothes!" I would say, "Hold it, Doc. This coat would be an overcoat for you. You could walk a half block in these trousers and they wouldn't move at your size. Doc, this is mine. This is my suit."

Why? I paid for it. That is why it is mine. I went down to Jack Fox and Sons and I paid for it. It is mine.

Jesus bought you.

You say, "Well, it is my business what I do."

No, what you do is the business of the One Who purchased you. If you are saved, you are saved because you have been purchased. A young man sat in my office not long ago and said, "I want to get married now!"

I said, "It isn't right to decide whether you're getting married *now* or not. What would He have you do?"

"Well, I'll run off and get married."

"Go ahead, but you'll come back to my office one of these days wishing you had done what He wanted you to do."

You girls may say, 'Well, I'll tell you, I'm going with an unsaved boy, and he's the star of the football team. He's my 'dream boat.' Oh, those broad shoulders! That bushy hair! That countenance! Those strong arms! What a man!"

"I know, but he's not saved."

You say, "It's my business whom I marry."

It is not your business whom you marry. It is His business. You have no right to marry whom you want to marry. You have no right to go where you want to go. You have no right to say what you want to say. You have no right to hear what you want to hear. You have no right to be what you want to be. You have no right to live where you want to live. It is His business what you say, what you hear, what you do, where you live, where you go. It is His business! He purchased you. He owns you. You are not your own. He created you. You were born to Him. He purchased you.

The result of realizing you belong to Him is real peace and joy. Check back in your life for a minute. Relive it. Think of the bad times. Think of the times when you absolutely could not face the next day. Right now, think about the times when you thought you could not live another day. Think of the times when you wanted to die. Those were the times you refused to let Him use you as He pleased.

My son, Dave, said last night, "Dad, out soul winning in the ghettos in Chicago the kids say, 'We're having hell right now. We'll ask them, 'What if you die?' They'll say, 'I'd just as soon die as live.'"

That is why they have the gang wars. Life means nothing to them. They are in hell anyway. Death would be a relief to many of them, they think. Why? I'll tell you why. All of the frustrations of life are a direct result of the times that we decide to take over the reins of our lives.

One night an old preacher, near eighty, said to me, "Dr. Hyles, would you pray with me?"

We knelt at the altar of a big tent; nobody was there but the two of us. He began to pray, with tears falling in the sawdust. He prayed, "Dear heavenly Father, I hate flour."

I thought, "That's not in the Westminster Catechism."

He said, "Dear Lord, I hate flour. Oh, I hate flour!"

I thought, "Good night, the fellow is senile."

He said, "Dear God, I hate baking powder. Oh, I hate baking powder."

I looked at him while he was praying. His eyes were filled with tears; tears were dropping on the sawdust. He kept on praying.

"Dear Lord, I hate shortening. Oh, I hate shortening. Dear Lord, I hate salt. Oh, I hate salt!" I watched him while he prayed. I didn't bow my head any more. I figured that somebody ought to watch.

Then all of a sudden, he lifted his hands toward Heaven and a smile came across his face while his eyelids were still shut and he said, "But, dear Cod, You put them all together, mix them up, and put them in the oven, and I sure do like hot biscuits."

I understood what he meant. He was giving me a lesson in Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.

Beloved, when you give you hands and your eyes to Him and you do what He wants you to do with every member of your body, it all works out okay. There are kids who come to my office and say, "I'll do whatever God wants me to do. Brother Hyles, if the Lord tells me what to do, I'll do it. I'll do what you say if God speaks to your heart." They never come back again with broken hearts. They never come again wanting to die. Why? They have found that the secret to the Christian life is doing what He would have them do and being what He would have them to be. Everything then works out right.

That is one reason why I don't fret a great deal. I am going to Detroit after a while. Tomorrow morning, tomorrow night, and Tuesday I preach at the Midwestern Baptist College in Pontiac, Michigan. The streets will be glazed outside, I guess. As bad as the weather is, I'm sure the runways will be glazed. I will be taking off before midnight, God willing, from O'Hare Field. I do not fret about it. Do you know why? I love God. I am in His will. I am not my own. If He wants to still this body in death, that is His business. This is His body. If He wants to hush these lips and still these eyes, that is His business. I am His.

I was flying to Detroit one day, and a lady beside me said, "Do you fly often?"

"Yes, I fly often."

"Do the engines always look like the one here on the right?"

I looked out and it was on fire. She said, "Is that the normal way they look?"

"No, ma'am. Do you see the one on the end that is not burning? That is the normal way.

"Is something wrong?"

"Yes, something is wrong."

The stewardess came running down the aisle of the plane and locked herself in the rest room. The pilot came on the P.A. and said, "Engine #2 is on fire. We're going to land just as soon as possible in the Metropolitan Airport." I looked down and there were fire engines lined up along the runway.

I said to the fellow on the other side of me, "See all those fire trucks down there?"

"Yeah, yeah, yeah!"

"They have us in mind. They are going to greet us."

"Why aren't you nervous?"

Now, I will be honest with you. I would rather live than die. (When we finally landed, I had enough strength for them to carry me off!) I told him and I will tell you, once you give your life to Christ, you are His. It is up to Him to take care of you. Because your body is His, you are not your own.

I can also find life's purpose when I let Him have what is His own. I want to fulfill my purpose in life. I want to say with Paul, "I have finished the course." When I lay down the Bible, walk Out of the pulpit for the last time, and somebody else stands where I stand and somebody else sits where I sit, I want to be able to say, "I have finished the course. He had something for me to do while I was there, and I did it." What else matters?

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You knelt at the altar or in your living room and said, "I want Christ as my Saviour."
From that moment forward, you have not belonged to yourself.

You say, "Well, I haven't decided yet whether I ought to get baptized or not." I have news for you. It is not your choice.

You say, "I will decide soon if I will get baptized." You do not have a right to decide. He has already decided for you. If you don't obey and get in that water, you will be rebelling against the will of God. That is not your body, it is His. It is not your right to decide; it is His right to decide. Get out of your seat, get down the aisle, get up in the baptistry and follow Christ! Why? He said do it! It does not matter what you think about it.

"Well," you say, "I haven't decided whether to join a church or not." Join anyhow, whether you have decided or not. Why? He has decided it. It is not your business; it is His.

You say, "I can't decide what church to join." You don't have a right to decide.

I often hear some entertainer say, "Tomorrow is Sunday. Go to the church of your choice." His talking is unscriptural! You don't have a right to go to the church of *your* choice. You have to go to church of His choice. Let me ask you some questions: Have you been driving your own car? Have you been deciding what you read? Have you been deciding what you say and where you go? You are a thief! You are not your own.

"Brother Hyles, wouldn't you ever like to curse?"

"I might, but I don't have a tongue."

"Do you ever think you would like to dance?"

"Maybe so, but I don't have any feet."

"Do you ever think you would like to hear some dirty music?"

"Maybe so, but I don't have any ears."

"Do you ever think you would like to read a dirty magazine or watch a dirty television program?"

"Maybe, but I don't have any eyes."

"Do you ever think you would like to play cards?"

"Maybe, but I don't have any hands; they are His! I am not my own!"

