

Surrender

The words of Jesus still ring out today with the invitation: “*Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you.*

Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle, and you will find rest for your souls for my yoke fits perfectly, and the burden I give you is light” (Matthew 11:28-30 NLT).

The Root of the Problem

One of the greatest challenges many of us face in life is in surrendering our self-will.

I am not speaking of the initial surrender to Jesus in receiving Him as Lord and Savior.

I am speaking of the defiant “self” that continues to spring up in various situations.

The very heart of the issue of surrendering situations lies in subduing the self-protective, self-assertive, totally self-centered nature with which we were born. As we mature and our horizons expand, we need to move beyond this infant state.

Areas of Surrender

1. Time

Resolve to stop and be used wherever the

Lord directs. We should not be so full of our own agenda and plans that we walk past those who are suffering, need a kind word, or helping hand. The serving Christian represents Christ’s presence on the earth as His Spirit is given full range to move through those who will obey His promptings.

2. Money/Material Things

Material things can occupy too great a place in our lives. Giving 10% of their increase was a practice in the Old Testament. Malachi 3:8-11 makes it clear that tithing opens the windows of heaven for the pouring out of great blessings.

Our motive for giving should not be in order to receive back; however, in Luke 6:38 Jesus says that an abundance will return to those who give generously. One’s giving extends far beyond money to include acts of kindness and help.

3. Image

“Our self image and the way we appear to others are perhaps the most difficult of all things for us to surrender. Even when we give our lives and everything else to Christ, we feel we must look good both to ourselves and to our community of friends.” so states Calvin Miller in his book, *Letting Go*, Tyndale Publishers, 2003 p. 23.

While we all want to be looked on with favor we must make up our minds that God is the one we need to please by living by His standards as set forth in scripture. Others may misunderstand us but we are the ones responsible for examining the

motives determining our behavior thereby keeping a clear conscience.

4. Adult Children

Our children, whether toddlers, schoolage or adult, can actually become idols to us if we are not careful. Our desire to turn out a “good product” can affect the way we raise a child. For grown children, we may attempt to control them in a way that masquerades as “I just want the best for them.” We fail to remember that the “short term best” is often not the “long term best.”

5. Expectations

We become more free as we surrender our expectations of others.

Each of us has our own unique personality and way of responding to others in different situations. We should not expect everyone to view things exactly the way we do.

Our way is not the only, or necessarily the best way, to proceed. Others may actually have a better idea on the issue at hand. Respect their opinion and give them the courtesy of being heard.

6. Relationships

Relinquishment of relationships is sometimes very challenging; however, the tighter we hold on to other people the more they struggle to be free.

It can be very difficult to find peace over surrendering broken meaningful relationships. A key element of surrendering to God involves recognizing our own desires.

Before we can “let go” of any dream, heartache, or grudge we need to literally lay out all of our desires before God.

Once these desires are clearly identified we must step back and realize that fear can be intertwined with our lives. We may fear that what God had planned for our lives would fall short of all that we had desired, that somehow we are afraid our desires are too great for Him.

Through prayer we can come to understand that the exact opposite is true: no matter how great and big our desires, what God has planned is much more. If He were to fulfill all our desires exactly as we had envisioned, they would still only be a burning match compared to a blazing bonfire of intimacy that is possible with God. Somewhere in a deeper understanding of God’s plan for us and a true acceptance of this, lies the power to really surrender.

I have experienced over and over the power in letting go. God starts to work when we yield the situation and let Him take over. In issues of control He does not like our hands tightly gripping people or situations.

Healing of Resentments

Many have experienced deep hurt and resentment towards members of their family. We can be amazed to discover that

the people who are supposed to love us the most are often self-absorbed, callous, and sometimes cruel. Anger may fester in us like a cancer.

Relinquishment can come to us when we can honestly say before God, "My way leads to destruction. I want your will done in my life Lord, no matter what happens to me. I want to live upright before you. Following this surrender we often see family challenges change.

"We can hug our hurts and make a shrine out of our sorrows or we can offer them to God as a sacrifice of praise. The choice is ours."

"But when we release our grasp, our relinquishment puts a stop to our manipulation of other people and releases the Holy Spirit to do the supernatural through the power of prayer. It's an act of trusting God when we cannot envision a positive outcome." (both quotes: Carol Kent, *When I Lay My Isaac Down*, Navpress, 2004 p.33, 53.)

Remembering

We can encourage ourselves to lay down our burdens by recalling God's faithfulness to us over the years. We quiet ourselves and pull those instances up on the screen of our minds. Our faith is strengthened when we remind ourselves that "My thoughts are completely different from yours," says the Lord." "And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine" (Isaiah 55:8 NLT).

The words of Romans 8:28 NLT, "And we

know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them." is an often quoted scripture for many going through troubling times. God sees from the beginning to the end of our lives. We can not know the final outcome of situations but we can determine to trust Him and release them into His hands.

Other Helps in Releasing

In addition to recounting the faithfulness of God another help is to be found by taking a hard look at the situation facing us and ask, "Is this really my problem or am I just trying to fix it for my own comfort or the comfort of another?" Often we will discover it is not really ours to "fix." We have "owned" something that really belongs to another.

"Don't worry about anything, instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. If you do this you will experience God's peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6-7 NLT).

Which of us does not want to experience that peace? We live in a troubled, violent, strife filled world. To walk in peace is a great prize to be eagerly sought. With peace comes a deep rest knowing that "all is well."

Remember the prerequisite for this peace is to be found in bringing all the needs, concerns, and anxieties to Him in prayer. We can not overlook this vital step.

Prayer: Lord, help me to be willing to allow you to expose the areas where self is on the throne in my life. Show me where I have taken responsibility for things that are not really mine to deal with. Give me the grace to release those things to your care and not pick them up again.

Surrender Relinquishment



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