

The Surrendered Life

Surrender.” What does this word tell you? In literal terms, surrender means “to give up something to another person.” It also means to relinquish something granted to you. This may include your goals, possessions, power, or even your life. Christians today hear much about the **surrendered life**. But what does it mean, exactly? The surrendered life is the act of giving back to Jesus the life He granted you. It’s relinquishing control, rights, power, direction, all the things you do and say. It’s totally resigning your life over to His hands, to do with as He pleases.

Jesus himself lived a **surrendered life**: *“I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me”* (John 6:38). *“I seek not Mine own glory”* (John 8:50). Christ never did anything on His own. He made no move and spoke no word without being instructed by the Father. *“I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father has taught Me, I speak these things.... For I do always those things that please Him”* (John 8:28–29).

Jesus’ full surrender to the Father is an example of how we all should live. You may say, “Jesus was God in flesh. His life was surrendered before he even came to earth.” But the **surrendered life** is never imposed on anyone, including Jesus.

“Therefore does My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have the power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again” (John 10:17–18).

Jesus was literally telling us, *“... Make no mistake. The act of self-surrender is totally within My power to do. I’m choosing to lay down My own life. And I’m not doing it because some man told Me to. Nobody’s taking My life from Me. My Father gave Me the right and the privilege to lay down My life. He also gave Me the choice to pass up this cup and avoid the cross. But I choose to do it, out of love and **full surrender** to Him.”*

Our heavenly Father has given all of us this same right: the privilege to choose a surrendered life. No one is forced to yield his life to God. Our Lord doesn’t make us sacrifice our will and give back our lives to Him. He freely offers us a Promised Land - full of milk, honey and fruit. However, we may choose not to enter that place of fullness.

THE PATH OF SURRENDER

God begins the process of surrender by knocking us off our high horse. This literally happened to Paul. He was going his self-assured way, riding toward Damascus, when a blinding light came from heaven. Paul was knocked to the ground, trembling. Then a voice spoke from heaven, saying, *“Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?”* (Acts 9:4).

Paul knew something was missing in his life. He had a knowledge of God, but no firsthand revelation. Now on his knees, he heard these words from heaven: *“I am Jesus whom you persecute”* (Acts 9:5). The words

turned Paul's world totally upside down. Scripture says, "*Trembling and astonished, [Paul] said, 'Lord, what will you have me to do?'*" (Acts 9:6). Paul's conversion was a dramatic work of the Holy Spirit.

Paul was being led by the Holy Spirit into the **surrendered life**. He asked, "*Lord, what would you have me to do?*" and his heart was crying out, "*Jesus, how can I serve you? How can I know you and please you? Nothing else matters. Everything I've done in my flesh is worthless. You're everything to me now.*"

Paul had no other ambition, no other driving force in his life, than this: "*That I may win Christ*" (Philippians 3:8). By today's standards of success, Paul was a total failure. He didn't construct any buildings. He didn't have an organisation or a TV program. And the methods he used were despised by other leaders. In fact, the message Paul preached offended large numbers of his hearers. At times he was even stoned for preaching it. His subject? The **cross**.

When we stand before God at the judgment, we won't be judged by our ministries, achievements or number of converts. There will be but one measure of success on that day: ***Were our hearts fully and completely surrendered to God?*** Did we lay aside our own will and agenda and take up His? Did we succumb to peer pressure and follow the crowd, or did we seek Him alone for direction? Did we run from seminar to seminar looking for purpose in life, or did we find our fulfilment in Him?

The truth is, we can have as much of Christ as we want. We can go as deep in Him as we choose, living fully by His word and direction. Or, we can continue to do our own thing. It's entirely up to us! God will never force the **surrendered life** upon us!