

## What Surrender is NOT

Surrender *is not* a solution to all of life's problems. It *is not* a quick spiritual fix. ***It is a way of life.*** You will never ***arrive*** at the place of spiritual maturity. Spiritual maturity does not come from any accomplishments but rather from the recognition of what we are and feel and our willingness to surrender it all. You may have a point of beginning but never a point of ending. You simply become more in tune to the Holy Spirit as He works in your heart. As you start surrendering your honest motives and feelings, it's like an onion being peeled - you think you're at a level of truth and then the Holy Spirit reveals more areas of deceit.

## Control

If you walk in surrender long enough, you will face head-on the issue of control. Control comes in many forms. Some women are so obviously controlling that people flee to escape their clutches. Just because a woman is not obvious about it, doesn't mean she isn't controlling. The silent martyr, the meek manipulator, the head-strong bully, all have one goal: to control others. *Control is about power.* This power is ultimately *self-serving* as it protects the heart and meets ego needs.

***Writing the End of the Story*** is a very common area of control with situations and relationships. A person will determine the outcome of a relationship and then try to force the situation to bring about that outcome. All of us do it to some degree. In some areas of life, such as the business world, writing the end of the story is not necessarily bad. It's good to have a plan of action, goals, and direction. But what works in the secular world can be destructive in the spiritual realm. When we write the end of the story in spiritual matters, we are setting ourselves up for a fall.

In order to grow spiritually, we must quit writing the end of the story. It takes real honesty to recognize when we are doing it. But it happens in *friendships, romances, Christian relationships, spiritual pursuits, etc.* When we write a script for God or others to follow, we set ourselves up for disappointment. It is so much less stressful and disappointing when we admit we don't know the end of the story and God is a ***much*** better author.

## The Condition of Man's Heart

If you read the four gospels, you will notice a common theme. All of Christ's teachings and words pointed to one thing: the condition of man's heart. The words spoken by David, thousands of years before Christ, still held true in Christ's time, as they do now: "A broken and a contrite heart—these, O God, You will not despise" (Psalm 51:17). Man has set up religious systems on earth that include hierarchy, power, prestige, popularity, possessions, and status. While these things are both the creation and natural result of man's institutions, their existence cannot change one person's heart. No position, religion, or institution can change a person's heart. Only God changes hearts and our hearts are the only thing God wants.

***Jeremiah 17:9: "The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; Who can understand it? I, the Lord, search the heart..." God knows the condition of our "black little heart." All He wants from us is to know it, too, and surrender it to Him.***

## A Life of Surrender

Surrender is not a one-time act. It is something that we do for a lifetime. Things change. As they do there are new hurts, offenses and emotional upheaval. But your first acts of surrender should start with what is in your

heart right now. **First**, face the truth. Ask God to show those things to you in all of their destructive ugliness. **Second**, cup your hands in front of you. Then close your eyes and see Jesus on the cross. He is looking at you. In His eyes, you see only oceans of love and complete acceptance. **Third**, in your mind's eye, place the ugly heart issue into your cupped hands. Look at it for all of its destructiveness. **Be bold. Be honest. Finally**, give it to Him. Say, "Dear Jesus, I give you my (*whatever it is*). I can't fix it. I can't change it. I can't control it. I can only surrender it to You. I leave it with You, Jesus. **Lastly**, open your hands and physically leave it at the foot of the cross.

Do this *over and over again* with each thing that comes across your heart. Do this when the theater of your mind wants to play revenge. Do this when you feel the ugly feelings stirring in your heart. Do this daily, sometimes *moment by moment*. If you do, the chains of hurt, betrayal, abuse, terrible choices and all else that keeps you in bondage, will drop away one by one. As you surrender, the links open and drop away.

### Verses referenced in this lesson:

**1 Corinthians 15:36-38** What a foolish question! When you put a seed into the ground, it doesn't grow into a plant unless it dies first. **37** And what you put in the ground is not the plant that will grow, but only a bare seed of wheat or whatever you are planting. **38** Then God gives it the new body He wants it to have. A different plant grows from each kind of seed.

**2 Corinthians 12:10** That's why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

**Isaiah 66:1-2** Thus says the LORD, 'Heaven is My throne, and earth is My footstool. Where is the house you could build for Me? And where is a place that I may rest? For My hand made all these things, thus all these things came into being,' declares the LORD. "But to this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word".

**John 1:47** Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!"

**John 8:2-10** Early in the morning He came again to the temple. All the people came to Him, and he sat down and taught them. **3** The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst **4** they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. **5** Now in the Law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?" **6** This they said to test Him, that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with His finger on the ground. **7** And as they continued to ask Him, He stood up and said to them, "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her." **8** And once more He bent down and wrote on the ground. **9** But when they heard it, they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before Him. **10** Jesus stood up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?"

**Jeremiah 17:9** "The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; Who can understand it? I, the Lord, search the heart..."

**Matthew 5:39** But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.

**Matthew 8:20** Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.

**Matthew 10:39** If you cling to your life, you will lose it; but if you give up your life for me, you will find it.

**Matthew 19:30** But many who are the greatest now will be least important then, and those who seem least important now will be the greatest then.

**Matthew 20:26-28** But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, **27** and whoever wants to be first among you must become your slave. **28** For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give His life as a ransom for many.

**Philippians 3:7-8** I once thought these things were valuable, but now I consider them worthless because of what Christ has done. **8** Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For His sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ.

**Psalms 51:17** A broken and a contrite heart—these, O God, You will not despise.