

Necessary Ingredients for the Christian Journey

“I Surrender All”

Luke 9:23-26

INTRODUCTION:

This morning we are moving on to the next ingredient on the Christian journey after covering both truth and love, and the next ingredient is surrender. We have covered this topic before, but we are going to be looking at it through a different lens and possibly a bit more in-depth.

Surrender is a word that most of us wrestle with because surrendering for many feels like giving up. We must reconsider that if we are on the wrong team or going the wrong way, we indeed must give up going the direction we are or being on the team we are on because in fact, we find ourselves enemies of God and His cause. We must then learn to let go of our wishes, desires, and priorities and realign them to the will of the Lord. Many are okay regarding certain ideas about surrender if they see a personal benefit in it. But the idea of being told what to do repulses many and will have nothing of it. We as believers are to surrender not for what we get out of it, but rather our surrender should come on the basis of the Lord's own authority.

Let me begin with a quote from Elisabeth Eliot whose husband you may have heard of Jim Eliot. He was killed making contact with the Auca people of eastern Ecuador.

Elisabeth Elliot, The Path of Loneliness: Finding Your Way Through the Wilderness to God:

“Can we give up all for the love of God? When the surrender of ourselves seems too much to ask, it is first of all because our thoughts about God Himself are paltry. We have not really seen Him, we have hardly tested Him at all and learned how good He is. In our blindness we approach Him with suspicious reserve. We ask how much of our fun He intends to spoil, how much He will demand from us, how high is the price we must pay before He is placated.

If we had the least notion of His loving-kindness and tender mercy, His fatherly care for His poor children, His generosity, His beautiful plans for us; if we knew how patiently He waits for our turning to Him, how gently He means to lead us to green pastures and still waters, how carefully He is preparing a place for us, how ceaselessly He is ordering and ordaining and engineering His Master Plan for our good-if we had any inkling of all this,

could we be reluctant to let go of our smashed dandelions or whatever we clutch so fiercely in our sweaty little hands?

If with courage and joy we pour ourselves out for Him and for others for His sake, it is not possible to lose, in any final sense, anything worth keeping. We will lose ourselves and our selfishness. We will gain everything worth having.”

Luke 9:23-26 ESV

²³ And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. ²⁴ For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. ²⁵ For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself? ²⁶ For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

Luke 9:23-26 NLT

²³ Then he said to the crowd, “If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross daily, and follow me. ²⁴ If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it. ²⁵ And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but are yourself lost or destroyed? ²⁶ If anyone is ashamed of me and my message, the Son of Man will be ashamed of that person when he returns in his glory and in the glory of the Father and the holy angels.

In the next few weeks, we are going to be looking at the Problem of Surrender, the Pain of Surrender, and the Process of Surrender. Notice nowhere in these three do we see the Pleasure of Surrender. At times people have often asked me how long surrender takes, and this question is only asked after they see their personal need to surrender. (Most of the time this comes from a place of disparity.) My response is the same, it all depends on you and your willingness to let go and let God be God in your life. The Christian life works in no other way than for a life to yield itself in surrender to its Maker and Lord.

Today we are going to be looking at the problem of surrender. Why is it a problem? Because many want the benefits of Jesus but not Jesus Himself.

I. “If anyone”

A. The invitation is open to all.

B. There is no discrimination in opportunity. No one can say I wasn't invited.

C. Anyone of any race, creed, nationality, or gender has the invitation of Jesus to come unto Him.

D. The invitation is *inclusive*, but the way unto salvation is *exclusive*.

E. Many reject Christianity because they don't like the exclusivity of Christ, therefore, they want salvation, forgiveness, a mansion in heaven, etc., but they don't want to surrender to the terms. What are the terms? The old self has to go!

F. Too many of us have grown up in the luxury of a country that says, “You can be anything you want to be.” Well, that statement is coming to bite us in the backside, isn't it?

G. But also, it has made us believe that we have a seat at the negotiation table with God in how our salvation needs are to work itself out.

H. Many “Christians” are rejecting Biblical Christianity, while not realizing it, because they believe that somehow you have salvation and get to do it on your own terms. Such statements like...

- “I'll get around to it.”
- “I'm just not ready to be told what to do.”
- “God understands how I am.”
- “Me and Jesus got our own thing going.”
- “Me and God are good...Don't you worry about us.”
- “God and I, we are nearly at a deal.”

Andrew Murray

May not a single moment of my life be spent outside the light, love and joy of God's presence and not a moment without the entire surrender of myself as a vessel for Him to fill full of His Spirit and His love.

II. “Would Come After Me”

- A. Christ, in this statement, is saying if there is any who will come after me...
- B. This statement is a statement of direction.
- C. Christ is not coming after us (He did that by being born) but is inviting anyone who would come after Him.
- D. He is the direction setter. He is the boss who is calling the shots. He is the One in whom we bend our life around, not His around us.
- E. Again this is not up for negotiation. If you don't want to surrender then pass Jesus on by because it is not up for discussion.
- F. We are invited to voluntarily surrender to Christ if we want to be a part of Him.

Billy Sunday

Conversion is a complete surrender to Jesus. It's a willingness to do what he wants you to do.

III. “Let Him Deny Himself”

- A. Notice the phrase begins with “let him.” Let the person deny himself.
- B. It is our choice to deny ourselves.
- C. This points us back to a discussion we had a few weeks ago. The old self that is not in Christ must die. We can love the new self in Christ, but the old self is rotten to the core.
- D. The old self invites us back to the ways of sin, the new self into the ways of New Creation which is the character of Christ.
- E. It is for the reason that surrender is a problem because most of us still love our old identity. We may not like all of our ways, but we hold on to at least some of us because we aren't at the point where we trust God to take care of us.

F. Many of us fall into the place where we say we believe God will take us to Heaven, but not at a place where we believe He will take care of us here in the next moment.

Clovis G. Chappell

God owns all; He owns me; He owns my home; He owns my children; He owns my property. I have called your attention before to the fact that the modern idea of ownership is pagan. The Christian idea is this: that God is the absolute owner of all things.

Chip Ingram

God always has and always will look for men and women who say to Him, 'I trust you so much, I'm all in. I want your way not mine. I am willing to live by faith!

Conclusion

Many of us truthfully don't want to let go and let God be God. We simply hang around for the benefit of God, but we aren't so in love with God yet. The problem with surrender is we are forced to come to that place of trust because God will not show us more until we learn to trust Him.

Hannah Whitall Smith

It is wonderful what miracles God works in wills that are utterly surrendered to Him. He turns hard things into easy and bitter things into sweet. It is not that He puts easy things in the place of the hard, but He actually changes the hard thing into an easy one.

Galatians 2:19-20

¹⁹ For when I tried to keep the law, it condemned me. So I died to the law—I stopped trying to meet all its requirements—so that I might live for God.

²⁰ My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So, I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.