

Scary Words – Jesus predicted end-time spiritual poverty

Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it. (Mathew 7:13-14, NIV)

Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!' (Mat.7:22-23 NIV)

And someone said to Him, "Lord, are there just a few who are being saved?" And He said to them, "Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able." (Luke 13:23-24)

"I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. Because you say, 'I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,' and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked," (Revelation 3:15-17)

The end-time problem is self-deception:

"Lord, Lord, **did we not...**?"

"you say, 'I am rich...and have need of nothing' and **do not know** that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked"

More Scary Words from the Spirit of Prophecy

It is a solemn statement that I make to the church that not one in twenty whose names are registered upon the church books are prepared to close their earthly history, and would be as verily without God and without hope in the world as the common sinner." (Christian Service, page 41)

If Christ predicted that self-deception would be epidemic in end-time Christianity, how can we possibly recognize our true condition?

By recognizing the signs – Tilly Smith and the Tsunami of 2004 – 213,000 people died that day, but not one at her hotel. Because she recognized the signs of impending disaster.

Broad-road signposts in my own life

1. I did not really enjoy communing with God in prayer. I found it difficult to pray for any length of time.
2. I did not enjoy marinating in God's Word each day. I had read the Bible so much that very little seemed new and interesting.
3. I did not have a love for souls and a passion to share God's greatness with those around me.
4. I did not experience consistent victory over the known, chosen sins in my life. I often found myself repeating the same sins over and over again.
5. I did not give God my best time and attention on the Sabbath day. Often my favorite activity on God's special day was to sleep.
6. I did not carefully guard what I read, watched and listened to, so that only the true and pure and lovely would be allowed to enter my mind.
7. I did not value my relationship with Jesus more than anything, and I did not protect and enhance that relationship with every choice that I made.

What can I do if I recognize broad-road signposts in my life?

- Should I roll up my sleeves and force myself to pray more?
- Should I grit my teeth and try to enjoy God's Word?
- Should I knuckle down and try harder to obey?
- Should I force myself to get involved in witnessing?

The Dilemma – We fight God as He tries to bless us – We are our own worst enemy – Because of the “flesh”, we can't help it

...the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, (Romans 8:7)

For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin. For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate. (Romans 7:14-15)

Can the Ethiopian change his skin Or the leopard his spots? Then you also can do good Who are accustomed to doing evil. (Jeremiah 13:23)

There are some who seem to be always seeking for the heavenly pearl. But they do not make an entire surrender of their wrong habits. They do not die to self that Christ may live in them. Therefore they do not find the precious pearl. They have not overcome unholy ambition and their love for worldly attractions. They do not take up the cross and follow Christ in the path of self-denial and sacrifice. Almost Christians, yet not fully Christians, they seem near the kingdom of heaven, but they cannot enter there. Almost but not wholly saved, means to be not almost but wholly lost. (Christ's Object Lessons, p.118)

The Only Solution is Circumcision–The cutting away of the flesh

and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; (Colossians 2:11)

...our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin. (Romans 6:6-7)

The Lord can do nothing toward the recovery of man until, convinced of his own weakness, and stripped of all self-sufficiency, he yields himself to the control of God. Then he can receive the gift that God is waiting to bestow. (DA. p. 300)

Through the right exercise of the will, an entire change may be made in your life. By yielding up your will to Christ, you ally yourself with the power that is above all principalities and powers. You will have strength from above to hold you steadfast, and thus through constant surrender to God you will be enabled to live the new life, even the life of faith. (SC, p.48)

The Carbon Monoxide Analogy

“Carbon Monoxide is an insidious poison. It is invisible to both our eyes and our noses, but its molecules attach themselves to our blood cells and prevent them from binding to the oxygen molecules that we need to survive. Although there may be an abundance of oxygen all around us, we suffocate because we simply cannot use that life-giving oxygen.”

Our sinful natures are the same way. God's gifts inundate us every second of every day but we are incapable of receiving many of them if the sinful nature is in control. In fact not only do we fail to receive the good things of God, but we fight the very One Who is trying so hard to bless us. The problem is the flesh. The sinful nature just will not let us go and we suffocate in spite of the abundance of blessings that surround us.

Parable: Rich, the Poor Man

It is not God's fault

We [must] begin at the real beginning, with love as the Divine energy. This primal love is Gift-love. In God there is no hunger that needs to be filled, only plenteousness that desires to give”

C.S. Lewis, *The Four Loves*, p. 121

“...the LORD longs to be gracious to you, And therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you. For the LORD is a God of justice; How blessed are all those who long for Him”

Isaiah 30:18

What more was there to do for My vineyard that I have not done in it? Why, when I expected it to produce good grapes did it produce worthless ones?

Isaiah 5:4

Holding up an umbrella

Why is God not blessing us more? Where are the showers of blessings? Why am I not drenched in God's abundant goodness?

Unwilling to be Blessed

McDonalds illustration – we know it's unhealthy, but we enjoy it too much to give up

Rich, Young Ruler – desperately desires eternal life, but went away sad when he found out how much it cost.

For thus the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel, has said, 'In repentance and rest you will be saved, In quietness and trust is your strength.' But you were not willing, (Isaiah 30:15).

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, ... How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. (Matthew 23:37)

The Powerlessness of God

How many of God's precious children did He save from the flood and from Sodom and Gomorrah? Does He love us any less than them? Can He rescue us?

Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with me.” (Revelation 3:20)

Our God is a knocking God.

God has given us the power of choice. He has willingly and lovingly taken that power away from Himself and given it to us. The power of choice is our only power and it will always be our power. He will never take it away from us.

The weakest human can stop the almighty God in His tracks. God will never bend us to His will, regardless of how desperately He longs to bless us. That is pretty scary.

God sometimes says, “yes,” sometimes, “no”, other times, “wait,” but perhaps most often He says, “Oh, if only I could.”

Will we fling open the door of our heart to its widest possible extents and let Jesus come in fully?

The Definition of Surrender

But many are attracted by the beauty of Christ and the glory of heaven, who yet shrink from the conditions by which alone these can become their own. There are many in the broad way who are not fully satisfied with the path in which they walk. They long to break from the slavery of sin, and in their own strength they seek to make a stand against their sinful practices. They look toward the narrow way and the strait gate; but selfish pleasure, love of the world, pride, unsanctified ambition, place a barrier between them and the Saviour. **To renounce their own will, their chosen objects of affection or pursuit, requires a sacrifice at which they hesitate and falter and turn back.** Many "will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Luke 13:24. They desire the good, they make some effort to obtain it; but they do not choose it; **they have not a settled purpose to secure it at the cost of all things.**

--Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, p. 143

Definition of surrender: a "settled purpose to secure [God's blessings] at the cost of all things."

Surrender says, "I am willing for the bucket of my life to be emptied of every one of my worldly treasures, pleasures, and comforts"

Surrender says, "Lord, I am willing. Whatever the cost, I am willing. My life is no longer mine"
I desire only to be crucified in Christ so that it is not I who lives, but Christ in me

Surrender is a "settled purpose." It is not just a desire or even a "let's try it and see how it works." It is a "settled purpose."

Our Only Hope

The only hope for us if we would overcome is to unite our will to God's will and work in co-operation with Him, hour by hour and day by day. **We cannot retain self and yet enter the kingdom of God.** If we ever attain unto holiness, it will be through the renunciation of self and the reception of the mind of Christ. Pride and self-sufficiency must be crucified. Are we willing to pay the price required of us? Are we willing to have our will brought into perfect conformity to the will of God? Until we are willing, the transforming grace of God cannot be manifest upon us.

-- Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, p. 143.2

Perhaps it is better to start with an easier question: Does a Christian sin?

Bible passages that seem to indicate that Christians sin

There is not a righteous man on earth who does what is right and never sins. (Ecclesiastes 7:20)
If You, LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? (Psalms 130:3)
If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. (1 John 1:8)
If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us. (1 John 1:10)

Bible passages that seem to indicate that God gives Christians victory over sin

No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it. (1 Corinthians 10:13)
Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the **slave of sin**. (John 8:34)
our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would **no longer be slaves to sin**; (Romans 6:6)
Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. (1 Peter 4:1-2)
...No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. (1 John 3:7-9)
No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him. (1 John 3:6)

Why is it important to understand sin?

The nature and the importance of the law of God have been, to a great extent, lost sight of. A wrong conception of the character, the perpetuity, and the obligation of the divine law has led to errors in relation to conversion and sanctification, and has resulted in lowering the standard of piety in the church. Here is to be found the secret of the lack of the Spirit and power of God in the revivals of our time. (GC 465)

How can we understand these seemingly conflicting passages about sin? Two Types of Sin: Un-chosen and Chosen

Un-chosen sin is innate badness & character flaws over which we have no control (pride, fear, selfishness, lust)
Un-chosen sin is what we "are" – Un-chosen sin is removed by the process of sanctification

When a man is getting better he understands more and more clearly the evil that is still left in him. When a man is getting worse he understands his own badness less and less (C.S. Lewis)
For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin. For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate...Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? (Roman 7:14-15, 24)

Un-chosen, but not ignored

But Christ has given us no assurance that to attain perfection of character is an easy matter. A noble, all-round character is not inherited. It does not come to us by accident. A noble character is earned by individual effort through the merits and grace of Christ. God gives the talents, the powers of the mind; we form the character. It is formed by **hard, stern battles with self**. Conflict after conflict must be waged against hereditary tendencies. We shall have to criticize ourselves closely, and allow not one unfavorable trait to remain uncorrected. (Christ Object Lessons, p. 331)

Chosen Sin

Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin. (James 4:17)
You can come in all your need, and plead the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour; but you cannot come expecting that Christ will cover your wickedness, your daily indulgence in sin, with his robe of righteousness. (BEcho, May 15, 1892)
There is no safety nor repose nor justification in transgression of the law. Man cannot hope to stand innocent before God, and at peace with Him through the merits of Christ, while he continues in sin. (ISM 213)
Do not think that God will work a miracle to save those weak souls who cherish evil, who practice sin; or that some supernatural element will be brought into their lives, lifting them out of self into a higher sphere, where it will be comparatively easy work, without any special effort, any special fighting, without any crucifixion of self; because all who dally on Satan's ground for this to be done will perish with the evildoers. (Testimonies to Ministers, p. 453)

God promises victory over chosen sin

We know that no one who is born of God sins; but He who was born of God keeps him, and the evil one does not touch him” (1 John 5:18). See also (1 Corinthians 10:13 above)
Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. (James 4:7)

Feeling the terrible power of temptation, the drawing of desire that leads to indulgence, many a man cries in despair, "I cannot resist evil." Tell him that he can, that he must resist. He may have been overcome again and again, but it need not be always thus. He is weak in moral power, controlled by the habits of a life of sin. His promises and resolutions are like ropes of sand. The knowledge of his broken promises and forfeited pledges weakens his confidence in his own sincerity and causes him to feel that God cannot accept him or work with his efforts. But he need not despair. **Those who put their trust in Christ are not to be enslaved by any hereditary or cultivated habit or tendency.** Instead of being held in bondage to the lower nature, they are to rule every appetite and passion. God has not left us to battle with evil in our own finite strength. Whatever may be our inherited or cultivated tendencies to wrong, we can overcome through the power that He is ready to impart. . . . (Councils on Health, p. 440)

Definition of chosen sin

Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. (1 John 3:4, KJV)

Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. (Matthew 7:21)

Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin. (James 4:17)

Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside **every** encumbrance and the sin which **so easily entangles us**, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, (Hebrews 12:1)

One wrong trait of character, one sinful desire cherished, will eventually neutralize all the power of the gospel.... The pains of duty and the pleasures of sin are the cords with which Satan binds men in his snares. Those who would rather die than perform a wrong act are the only ones who will be found faithful. (Testimonies for the Church. Vol. 5, p. 53.)

Sin is choosing any choice that we know (or even highly suspect) is not God's choice.

Sin is also refusing to recognize God's choices

How does a Christian sin? We are really asking two questions:

1. Does a true Christian commit un-chosen sins? YES
2. Does a true Christian commit chosen sins? RARELY

Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my **mind** [choices] am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my **flesh** [sinful nature] the law of sin. (Romans 7:25)

The will, refined and sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His service. When we know God as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of continual obedience. Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, sin will become hateful to us. (Desire of Ages, p. 668)

Complete victory over sin! But there's a prerequisite:

Do we see a pattern in these verses:

No one who is **born of God** practices sin (1 John 3:7-9)

he who has **suffered in the flesh** has ceased from sin (1 Pet. 4:1)

our **old self was crucified** with Him...so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; (Romans 6:6)

It is quite natural, at this point, to focus upon the thought of having to be obedient. This is where the Christian fails. **Our focus should be on surrender.** If we are consistent in our surrender, then God will work in us "...to will and to do of his good pleasure." (His Robe or Mine by Frank Phillips, p. 61)

But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts. (Romans 13:14)

I have been **crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live**, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. (Galatians 2:20, NIV)

When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, **the will is merged in His will**, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness. Then as the Lord looks upon us He sees, not the fig-leaf garment, not the nakedness and deformity of sin, but **His own robe of righteousness, which is perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah.** (Christ Object Lessons, p.311)

Three foundation principles upon which our understanding of surrender is based

1. We are, by nature, unwilling to be blessed (God works in us both to will...)
2. God will never force us to receive His goodness (we supply the choice)
3. God's true people do not continue in known, chosen bad choices (...and to do)

Ours is the power of choice

God has given us the power of choice; it is ours to exercise. We cannot change our hearts, we cannot control our thoughts, our impulses, our affections. We cannot make ourselves pure, fit for God's service. But we can choose to serve God, we can give Him our will; then He will work in us to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Thus our whole nature will be brought under the control of Christ.

(Ministry of Healing, p.176)

How do we give God our power of choice? Are we puppets, completely controlled by God?

We cannot relinquish our power of choice – we return it to Him by making His choices over our own

“Everything depends on the right action of the will”

The tempted one needs to understand the true force of the will. This is the governing power in the nature of man—the power of decision, of choice. Everything depends on the right action of the will. Desires for goodness and purity are right, as far as they go; but if we stop here, they avail nothing. Many will go down to ruin while hoping and desiring to overcome their evil propensities. They do not yield the will to God. (Ministry of Healing, p. 176)

As the will of man co-operates with the will of God, it becomes omnipotent.” (COL, p. 333)

Surrender is: an event, a process, a lifestyle, all-or-nothing, all-at-once, hard, a privilege

Surrender is an event

Surrender is the moment that we come to a “settled purpose to secure [God's good] at the cost of all things.”

(Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, p. 143)

Three things to remember about the event of surrender:

1. It is the moment that self is truly crucified
If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it” (Matthew 16:24-25)

Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.
(Galatians 5:24)

2. It rarely occurs during a spiritual “high”
3. It does not happen often – it usually sticks the first time

Conversion is another name for the event of surrender. But conversion is often misunderstood

The new birth is a rare experience in this age of the world. This is the reason why there are so many perplexities in the churches. Many, so many, who assume the name of Christ are unsanctified and unholy. They have been baptized, but they were buried alive. Self did not die, and therefore they did not rise to newness of life in Christ. (6BC p.1075)

The event of surrender is a radical separation from this world – Aron Ralston story

Surrender is a process

Marriage is a good analogy – We do not become experts at marriage at the marriage ceremony

We do not become experts at surrender at the event of surrender

- we continue to learn more about surrender and how it works
- we are shown new areas in our lives that need surrendering
- self-denial becomes a greater and greater joy

But... **Marriage is not a process in the sense that we commit adultery less and less**

Surrender is not a process in the sense that we chose bad choices less and less

At every stage of development our life may be perfect; yet if God's purpose for us is fulfilled, there will be continual advancement (Christ Object Lessons, p.65)

Surrender is a lifestyle

Taco Bell sauce packet – "I'm not just a sauce; I'm a way of life."

Jesus is not just something that we put on our life to make it more palatable – He is our life

Surrender is not just an event and a process, it is a whole new way of living.

Surrender cannot occur without producing dramatic changes in almost every aspect of our lives

No longer are we hot with a little bit of cold mixed in. We're all hot. We're on fire hot. We're burning hot.

There's nothing lukewarm about us anymore

Others will not be able to miss our love for Jesus and for them. Our gentle spirit, our victory over sin, our joy in life, will be seen.

True Balance may seem unbalanced

But some may see our careful alignment with the will of God and call us legalistic and/or fanatical

God is a God of balance...but not in the lukewarm sense of the word. God's true balance is so far from the world's idea of balance that those who are truly aligned to him seem unbalanced.

The devil's constant work is to take the good things of God and condense, refine, artificialize, and process them to the point that God's good things become superficially more pleasurable, but bad for us. Take for examples: sugar, cheese, movies.

No wonder God's good things seem so bland in comparison. Have you ever drunk delicious, fresh-squeezed orange juice after eating a donut? What happened? The juice did not change.

We should not be prevailed upon to take anything into the mouth that will bring the body into an unhealthy condition, no matter how much we like it. Why?--Because we are God's property. You have a crown to win, a heaven to gain, and a hell to shun. Then for Christ's sake, I ask you, Will you have the light shine before you in clear and distinct rays, and then turn away from it and say, "I love this, and I love that?" (Councils on Diets and Foods, p. 328)

They do not bear in mind that the way which they are traveling is a rugged, self-denying, self-crucifying way, and they must not expect everything to move on as smoothly as though they were traveling in the broad road" (Gospel Workers, p. 248)

The Christian life is a life of self-denial and cross-bearing. We are to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Have we enlisted in the service of the Lord, and are we indeed his soldiers? If we are the soldiers of Christ, it is our business to follow his directions, to obey orders implicitly. We are not our own, and we cannot plan for selfish gratification and pleasure. We cannot inquire, What is for our convenience, but only, What are our orders? No one looks upon the life of a soldier as a life of self-pleasing and gratification. (RH, May 5, 1891)

How much do I surrender?

Surrendered...ish means unsundered If God is not Lord **OF** all, He is not Lord **AT** all.

Remember the “good” kings

Jehoash did right in the sight of the LORD...**Only** the high places were not taken away;... (2 Kings 12:2-3)

Azariah son of Amaziah king of Judah became king...He did right in the sight of the LORD...**Only** the high places were not taken away; the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places. (2 Kings 14:29 - 15:4)

Jotham the son of Uzziah king of Judah became king...He did what was right in the sight of the LORD; ...**Only** the high places were not taken away; ... (2Ki. 15:32-35)

...**Amaziah** the son of Joash king of Judah became king...He did right in the sight of the LORD,...**Only** the high places were not taken away;...(2 Kings 14:1-4)

[Amaziah] did right in the sight of the LORD, yet not with a whole heart. - 2 Chronicles 25:2

Read the result of Amaziah’s “surrendered...ish” life in 2 Chronicles 25:14-16

For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him." (2 Chronicles 16:9)

Read the result of Asa’s total surrender in 2 Chronicles 14:2-5

One wrong trait of character, one sinful desire cherished, will eventually neutralize all the power of the gospel....

The pains of duty and the pleasures of sin are the cords with which Satan binds men in his snares. Those who would rather die than perform a wrong act are the only ones who will be found faithful. (Testimonies for the Church. Vol. 5, p. 53)

Whom have I in heaven but You? And besides You, I desire nothing on earth? (Psalms 73:25)

How quickly do I surrender?

Do we surrender on the payment plan or all-at-once?

When I married my wife, did I say, “I’ll commit myself to you 10% today and another 10% in a year?”

A large chasm is not crossed by a series of small jumps (paraphrased from David Lloyd George)

Jesus didn’t tell the Rich, Young Ruler to follow Him and they would work on the surrender problem. He said, “Go...and come back when you’re ready to surrender all” [my words]

The Lord can do nothing toward the recovery of man until, convinced of his own weakness, and stripped of all self-sufficiency, he yields himself to the control of God. (Desire of Ages, p. 300)

“Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come” (2 Corinthians 5:17). God promises a new creation not a new evolution.

Remember the parable of the city gates – all the gates must be closed before any good can come of it.

Although it may take the Lord weeks or months to bring us to the point where we are ready and able to surrender unreservedly and all-at-once, when that point comes it is total surrender.

How difficult is it to surrender?

Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it. (Matthew 7:13-14)

Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. (Luke 13:24)

Continued on back

How difficult is it to surrender? (continued)

But many are attracted by the beauty of Christ and the glory of heaven, who yet shrink from the conditions by which alone these can become their own. There are many in the broad way who are not fully satisfied with the path in which they walk. They long to break from the slavery of sin, and in their own strength they seek to make a stand against their sinful practices. They look toward the narrow way and the strait gate; but selfish pleasure, love of the world, pride, unsanctified ambition, place a barrier between them and the Saviour. To renounce their own will, their chosen objects of affection or pursuit, requires a sacrifice at which they hesitate and falter and turn back. Many "will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Luke 13:24. They desire the good, they make some effort to obtain it; but they do not choose it; they have not a settled purpose to secure it at the cost of all things. (Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, p. 143)

Demon-possessed boy at Mount of Transfiguration. Disciples could not cast it out.

Self is a demon that is deeply intertwined throughout every aspect of our life.

"But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting." (Matthew 17:21)

Surrender is not something that usually happens during an emotional high. We should be stone cold sober emotionally

The warfare against self is the greatest battle that was ever fought. The yielding of self, surrendering all to the will of God...is not an easy attainment. And yet it is [our] privilege and [our] duty to be a perfect overcomer here. (3T 106, 107)

To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me. (Colossians 1:29)

How do I become surrendered?

How to do anything in the Christian life

1. Pray in faith
2. Fulfill the conditions
3. Get out of God's way

Pray in faith

According to God's will, angel-wrestling, consistent, constant prayer

Prayer is heaven's ordained means of success in the conflict with sin and the development of Christian character. The divine influences that come in answer to the prayer of faith will accomplish in the soul of the suppliant all for which he pleads. For the pardon of sin, for the Holy Spirit, for a Christlike temper, for wisdom and strength to do His work, for any gift He has promised, we may ask; and the promise is, "Ye shall receive." (AA p. 564)

Fulfill the conditions

Many of God's blessings are conditional

if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land. (2 Chronicles 7:14, NIV)

Good examples: Noah, Gideon, Naaman

Bad examples: Achan, Cain

Often God replies to our prayers, "Oh, if only I could"

Get out of God's Way

Un-reserved, Un-resisting, Un-relenting submission to the will of God

Let Almighty God be Almighty God in you

Don't just open the door, fling it open, invite Him in and then sign over the deed to the house and everything in it.

How to become surrendered

1. Pray in faith
2. Fulfill the conditions
3. Get out of God's way

Pray in faith for surrender

This is a prayer that is always God's will

Pray the "whatever-it-takes" prayer. If it takes an atomic bomb to get you surrender – so be it.

Fulfill the conditions of surrender

1. Recognize that you are not surrendered – remember Laodicean self-deception
2. Count the costs

Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him, saying, “This man began to build and was not able to finish.” Or what king, when he sets out to meet another king in battle, will not first sit down and consider whether he is strong enough with ten thousand men to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. **So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions.** (Luke 14:26-33)

But whatever things were gain to me, those things **I have counted as loss** for the sake of Christ. More than that, **I count all things to be loss** in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and **count them but rubbish** so that I may gain Christ, (Philippians 3:7-8)

Areas to count

Thoughts/Opinions/Attitudes	Desires and aspirations
Comfort	Diet
Leisure/Entertainment	Time
Money	...and everything else too

God proposes marriage to us. We accept, but then comes the engagement period. During this time we seriously consider the consequences of our choice to make Him Lord of our life. By the time that the marriage (event of surrender) occurs, we're ready.

3. Seek to understand surrender better
 - “Self-surrender is the substance of the teachings of Christ” (D.A. p. 523)
 - Read the Bible (especially the New Testament) in the context of surrender

Get out of God's way

But how do we get out of God's way to get out of His way?

By being willing to be made willing. “Lord, I am willing, help my unwillingness”

This may be very difficult. It may require much prayer, immersion in the topic of surrender in scripture, and time (week or months).

Continued on back

How do I know if I am surrendered?

There is no hard and fast answer to this question. Because of Laodicean self-deception, continual self-distrust is a good thing.

The Holy Spirit is an indication of surrender – He only fills our emptiness

The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. We know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us. (1 John 3:24)

Notice the close association in this passage between obedience and the Holy Spirit

The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit." (John 3:8)

We should see some practical, tangible, short-term progress in many areas of our life.

Victory over sin is an indication of surrender

By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. (1 John 2:3)

No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him. (1 John 3:6)

The new birth consists in having new motives, new tastes, new tendencies. Those who are begotten unto a new life by the Holy Spirit have become partakers of the divine nature, and in all their habits and practices, they will give evidence of their relationship to Christ. . . (Review and Herald, April 12, 1892)

True enjoyment of Jesus is an indication of surrender

People who are friends with each other in more than just name, enjoy spending time together

In my experience, surrender revolutionized my prayer life. It became natural and easy.

How can I stay surrendered?

David's experience

...He raised up David to be their king, concerning whom He also testified and said, 'I HAVE FOUND DAVID the son of Jesse, A MAN AFTER MY HEART, who will do all My will.' (Acts 13:22)

Because David did what was right in the sight of the LORD, and had not turned aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, **except** in the case of Uriah the Hittite. (1 King 15:5)

When in ease and self-security he let go his hold upon God, David yielded to Satan and brought upon his soul the stain of guilt. . . . Bathsheba, whose fatal beauty had proved a snare to the king, was the wife of Uriah the Hittite, one of David's bravest and most faithful officers. . . . Every effort that David made to conceal his guilt proved unavailing. He had betrayed himself into the power of Satan. . . . There appeared but one way of escape, and in his desperation he was hurried on to add murder to adultery. . . . (Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 718)

We don't believe in once-surrendered-always surrendered. Taking the yoke includes keeping the yoke

The reason that we have not more of the Spirit and power of God with us is that we feel too well satisfied with ourselves. There is a marked tendency among those who are converted to the truth, to make a certain measure of advancement, and then settle down into a state of stolidity, where no further progress is attained. (BEcho, May 15, 1892)

Let none feel that their way needs no changing. Those who decide thus are not fitted to engage in the work of God, for they will not feel the necessity of pressing constantly toward a higher standard, making continual improvement. None can walk safely unless they are distrustful of self, and are constantly looking to the word of God, studying it with willing heart to see their own errors, and to learn the will of Christ, and praying that it may be done in and by and through them. They show that their confidence is not in themselves, but in Christ. They hold the truth as a sacred treasure, able to sanctify and refine, and they are constantly seeking to bring their words and ways into harmony with its principles. They fear and tremble lest something savoring of self shall be idolized...They are always seeking to subdue self, to put away everything that savors of it, and to supply the place with the meekness and lowliness of Christ. They are looking unto Jesus, growing up into him, gathering from him light and grace, that they may diffuse the same to others. (RH, April 12, 1892 par. 11)

Fight rationalization – Benjamin Franklin’s experience

“...in my first voyage from Boston, being becalmed off Block Island, our people set about catching cod, and hauled up a great many. Hitherto, I had stuck to my resolution of not eating animal food, and on this occasion I considered, with my master Tryon, the taking of every fish as a kind of unprovoked murder, since none of them had, or ever could do us, any injury that might justify the slaughter. All this seemed very reasonable. But I had formerly been a great lover of fish, and, when this came hot out of the frying-pan, it smelt admirably well. I balanced some time between principle and inclination, till I recollected that, when the fish were opened, I saw smaller fish taken out of their stomachs; then, thought I, “If you eat one another, I don’t see why we mayn’t eat you.” So I dined upon cod very heartily, and continued to eat with other people, returning, only now and then, occasionally to a vegetable diet.”

“So convenient a thing it is to be a reasonable creature, since it enables one to find or make a reason for everything one has a mind to do.”

Err on the side of self-denial

Many times in life there are gray areas – no “thus sayeth the Lord”

Self-denial keeps us stirred up for God and doesn’t let us settle

Tithing, Sabbath keeping, Fasting are all examples of self-denial

Deny self - Even good, necessary things from time to time

Plead with God continually and consistently to keep you submitted to Him.

How ugly is the surrendered life?

The Rich, Young Ruler was not attracted by the life of selfless service and denial.

Ellen White speaks of some who are tempted to give up because of the difficulties of the narrow way:

They do not bear in mind that the way which they are traveling is a rugged, self-denying, self-crucifying way, and they must not expect everything to move on as smoothly as though they were traveling in the broad road. (Testimonies, vol. 1, p. 129)

Continued on back

The surrendered life looks ugly on the outside

The Christian life is a life of self-denial and cross-bearing. We are to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Have we enlisted in the service of the Lord, and are we indeed his soldiers? If we are the soldiers of Christ, it is our business to follow his directions, to obey orders implicitly. We are not our own, and we cannot plan for selfish gratification and pleasure. We cannot inquire, What is for our convenience, but only, What are our orders? No one looks upon the life of a soldier as a life of self-pleasing and gratification. (RH, May 5, 1891)

The surrendered life only becomes beautiful when we look at it from the inside

Surrender is not only losing self, it is also flinging ourselves with utter abandon into the arms of the One Who loves us most.

The day that you heard you did not need to die, you felt this was a great gospel. Now, in another day, you are hearing that you do not need to live. This is also a great gospel. (Watchman Nee – Not I But Christ, p.111)

Surrender is a privilege. It is being held close to the Almighty God. We are His responsibility. All things work together for good for the truly surrendered.