



WELCOME TO BIBLE HOUSE OF GRACE

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Surrender and Following Christ

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Learn the Bible at Home

Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Surrender and Following Christ.

Topics.

- Sell all you have and give to the poor and come, follow me.
- Surrender and following Christ.
- The heart of worship is surrender.
- Fear blocks total surrender to God.
- The power of the Bible.
- God's greatest gift.

SELL ALL YOU HAVE AND GIVE TO THE POOR AND COME, FOLLOW ME

- **Luke 18:22-25:** when Jesus heard this (that the ruler had kept all the law) he said to him, "One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." ²³But when he heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich. ²⁴Jesus, looking at him with sadness, said, "How difficult it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!"

An extremely rich ruler who had done all the right things and kept the law asked Jesus, "What must he do to enter the Kingdom of heaven?" Jesus told him to sell all that he has and use it to help the poor, but his money had a hold on him, he couldn't do it. He was not willing to surrender all, or die to self and take up his cross (which in this man's case was giving away his money). He had surrendered his life to money, profit and wealth. For many who are wealthy it is difficult to enter the Kingdom of God because money has such a strong power over the heart and mind it fulfils all the craving of pride, self and ego. Abundant wealth brings fame and a sense of self-importance as well as the ability to purchase whatever the eyes set their affections on.

Added to this the mind and the time of those controlled by money is consumed in making more money or protecting the money they already have. People who lack abundant wealth should never judge the rich for the simple reason that the poor have far less to lay on the altar of God's will and because of this it is easier for those who lack to enter the Kingdom of God than for those who have abundance. For this reason, the poor (though their life maybe misery now) should praise God that the path to eternal life is easier for them to find than it is for a rich person. This man is not a wicked man, but a good man who sadly has surrendered his life to his wealth. Jesus does not condemn the man but feels sadness that the man's money has such a strong hold over him.

NOTE: the principal taught in this parable cannot be taken and used as a blanket statement to condemn all those who are rich. Though all who belong to Christ are called to lay their heart and all they own on the altar of God's will, not all are actually called to forsake everything and go into full-time ministry, but everyone is called to help others when it is in their power to do so. Christ needs servants not only ministering in churches and on the mission fields, but also amongst those in the secular world we can all be ambassadors for Christ and a light to God's grace love and goodness regardless of where we are, simply because wherever we are the Spirit of Christ is.

SURRENDER AND FOLLOWING CHRIST

There are all sorts of things in life we can surrender our life to some are positive and healthy while others are negative and destructive. We can surrender our life to family and doing-good to others or surrender to inspiring leaders, a loved one, to a career, a sport we love and such like things, or we can surrender our life to things such as selfish ambition and selfish desires, the opinions, demands or high expectations of others or to fear, pride, ego and lust etc. To follow Christ a person may have to re-surrender their life many times over this is because there is a moment of surrender, and there is the practice of surrender, which is moment by moment and lifelong. The problem with a loving sacrifice is that it can crawl off the altar so a person may have to re-surrender their life many times over to follow Christ this is why we all need to make a daily habit of surrender.

NOTE: this is not about salvation, but about following Christ no faithful brother or sister needs to continually commit their life to Christ to be saved, but to follow Christ we may since we are all called to share our testimony and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and daily walk in the fruits of the Spirit (i.e., love, kindness, compassion, mercy, grace, forgiveness and such like things) and this is not always easy since Christ calls us to show these attitudes of love not just to our family and friends, but to all humanity this is why we all need to make a daily habit of surrender.

Jesus said if people want to follow him, they must be willing to give up the things they want, this means being willing to give up our time and our will when called to do so. When a Christian decides to live a totally surrendered life, that decision will be tested, sometimes it will mean doing inconvenient, unpopular, and costly or seemingly impossible tasks and may often mean doing the opposite of what a person feels like doing.

An example: of this would be giving up leisure time to comfort another person or giving away some money we have put aside to give ourselves a treat. To follow the Lord Christians, need to see themselves in a relationship to Christ like that with their best friend. One of the characteristics of an infant Christian is the attitude of still arguing and struggling with God over His right to do with their life as He pleases rather than surrendering and accepting to His will for a situation, a circumstance or a family member or someone close to them that they might wish was in some way different, but have no power to change it. A faithful brother or sister in Christ will never find full joy in God until they completely surrender to God's grace, love and wisdom and God's will.

THE HEART OF WORSHIP IS SURRENDER

- **Romans 6:13:** Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.

Many today think gathering together to sing songs of praise is true worship, but though this is certainly beautiful and honouring to God it is not the ultimate act of worship. True worship before God is endeavouring to do all we can to live a life that honours Him and brings a good testimony to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Christian faith. Should anyone think this statement is not true consider the following, amongst the global body of Christ there are certain groups who gather together for prayer and worship every Sunday, but once the service is over, they live as they please and don't give God a second thought until next Sunday. It matters not how beautiful their voices may have been and how brilliant the organ or musicians may have sounded this kind of worship means nothing to God.

This is why Paul is saying:

- Do live a lifestyle of sin, but surrender to God and live according to what is right, good and wholesome.

Surrender is an unpopular word, disliked almost as much as the word submission. This is because it implies losing, and no one wants to be a loser, it evokes the unpleasant images of admitting defeat in battle, forfeiting a game, or yielding to a stronger opponent. The word is almost always used in a negative context, (i.e. captured criminals surrender to authorities). In today's competitive culture we are taught to never give up and never give in so we don't hear much about surrendering, if winning is everything, surrendering is unthinkable, we would rather talk about winning, succeeding overcoming and conquering than yielding, submitting, obeying and surrendering, but surrendering to God is the heart of worship. Surrender is the natural response to God's amazing love and mercy, Christians surrender and give themselves to Christ, not out of fear or duty, but in love, "because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19). Paul, after spending eleven chapters in the book of Romans explaining God's incredible grace to those who accept Christ, in the following verse urges the Romans to fully surrender their lives to God in worship.

- I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship (Rom. 12:1).

True worship is honouring God, and that happens when a Christian surrender themselves completely to His will. Surrendering ourselves to God and His will is what worship is all about this act of surrender is called making Jesus our Lord, taking up our cross, dying to self and yielding to the Spirit, but what matters is that a person does it, not what they call it God wants a our life, all of it, 95% percent is not enough.

FEAR BLOCKS TOTAL SURRENDER TO GOD

Fearful Christians often don't realise or comprehend, how much God loves them, that is why they want to control their own lives, they find it almost impossible to trust God, that is why they find it difficult to surrender because trusting God is an essential ingredient to surrender, but a person will not surrender to God unless they trust Him, but they can't trust him until they know Him better. Fear keeps people from surrendering, the Bible says:

- There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love (1 John 4:18).

Perfect love cast out fear, but a person can't love another until they know them. The key to overcoming fear is to know God better, it is to know His love, grace and mercy and that He is for all those who belong to Christ and not against them.

KNOWING GOD LOVES US

Knowing God loves us means knowing that God will not punish or harm us that is why love casts out fear, it is being confident that whether the circumstance we are in is good or bad, God's is with us and working an eternal purpose in our life for good. Many Christians have a brother or sister in Christ who they know loves them regardless of their failings, therefore they are comfortable and honest with each other, they know that their love for each other will cover any of their human limitations and imperfections. A mature Christian will have that kind of confidence and relationship with Christ.

Perhaps some might ask, "But how can a Christian know God loves them?" The answer to this question is not to judge God's love toward us by looking at our circumstances. This is because if our life is charmed, we will naturally believe God loves us, but if our life takes a nose dive we will be tempted to think God has withdrawn His love, but this kind of thinking stems from superstition and certainly not from the New Covenant of Grace.

The Bible says, "Who can know the will and ways of God?" if our relationship to God is dependent on our circumstances being favourable to us then our relationship is on a very fragile foundation, because circumstance in life can take a nose dive when we least expect it. Christians know God loves them not by the circumstances of their life, but by the following Scriptural evidences:

- You, O Lord, are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call upon you (Psalm 86:5).
- You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways (Psalm 139:3).
- The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love (Psalm 145:8).
- The LORD is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made (Psalm 145:9).
- For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for wholeness and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope (Jer. 29:11).
- Even the hairs of your head are all numbered (Matt. 10:30).
- God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8).
- Set your hopes on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy (1 Tim. 6:17).

These verses shine a brilliant spotlight on the truth that we are never out of God's sight and that God cares about every detail of our life and has given us the capacity to enjoy all kinds of pleasure. Added to this glory they show that God has plans for our life, He forgives us and is not only lovingly patient with us, but loves us infinity more than we can ever imagine. Now, as beautiful as all these sound, they are all worthless if while reading them we do not read them with faith. Without believing what God says His word is powerless and simply remains black and white print on beautiful rice paper, but when they are mixed with faith, they take on a supernatural power that has the potential not only enhance a person's life, but also power to change it.

THE POWER OF THE BIBLE

Some people pay hundreds of dollars to buy a Bible with a real leather cover the most glorious artwork and gold trimmed rice paper with the Scriptures written in a most majestic font. While others buy a second hand Bible from a Life-Line store for a couple of bucks, both these Bibles have the same power. This is because it is not how beautiful or expensive a Bible is that gives it power, but the faith of the person reading it. A two-dollar Bible read with faith will have far more power than the most beautiful ancient Bible with the most exquisite cover and brilliant craftsmanship and flawless artwork on its pages that a man or woman will pay thousands of dollars for, but only read it as they would read any other book. It is not the beauty and expense of a Bible that gives it power, but the humble heart condition and faith of the person reading it.

GOD'S GREATEST GIFT

Some who believe in God measure His love toward them by the circumstances of their life. When their life is blessed, they feel God loves them, but when they are suffering or in hardship, they feel God's has withdrawn his love, but this type of thinking is not only superstition and fantasy, but also judging God according to the fickle circumstances of life. The only way any faithful brother or sister in Christ should ever judge how

much God loves them is to look at God's most beloved Son on the cross of Calvary with a crown of thorns stabbing his bleeding head, his bloodstained body pierced with nails and his arms outstretched saying, I love you this much!

NOTE: surrendering to God does not mean giving up everything you enjoy; sometime the very thing you enjoy is the very gift God wants you to use to His glory. The following are three examples of this principle:

1. A person who is gifted at singing, on a world famous level, can use this gift to God's glory, not by Bible bashing people, but by living a moral and decent life toward other humans and doing-good to the less fortunate, they are in a privilege position to share their faith with people who the established church is not able to reach.
2. A person who is extremely good at business, this is also a gift of God, they can use their gift to show God's love by treating their workers fairly and not oppressing them and using the surplus money they make to help the poor or extend the Kingdom of God
3. God's gift for many may simply be to be a loving husband or wife and caring father and mother who raise their children in an environment of love and protection and share their faith as they go about their daily routines of life.

Surrendering to God is about accepting those circumstance in life that we have no control over as being from God, whether it is good bad or ugly, this does not mean that we lie down and do nothing to better our situation, it is about accepting what we cannot change, or have no control over. It is about accepting what is, rather than stressing and worrying over bad things that we cannot control or that haven't even happened yet. The best way to sum up a perfect life of surrender is to cite the following words of the prophet Habakkuk:

- Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD; I will take joy in the God of my salvation (Habakkuk 3:17-18).