

Surrender 101

Andrew Murray's First Chapter in "Absolute Surrender" (adapted by Chris)

Monday's Reading

"King Ben-hadad of Aram gathered all his army together; thirty-two kings were with him, along with horses and chariots. He marched against Samaria, laid siege to it, and attacked it. Then he sent messengers into the city to King Ahab of Israel and said to him, "Thus says Ben-hadad: Your silver and gold are mine; your fairest wives and children also are mine." The king of Israel answered, "As you say, my lord, O king, I am yours, and all that I have."
(1 Kings 20: 1-4)

King Ben Hadad asked for absolute surrender and Ahab gave absolute surrender. Even more, every child of God should repeat Ahab's words to our Creator, "As you say, my lord, O king, I am yours, and all that I have." It is rarely repeated these days and we should be reminded, the condition of God's blessing is absolute surrender of all into God's hands. Praise God! If our hearts would willingly surrender, there is no end to what God will do for us, and to the blessings God will bestow.

Once while I was in Scotland, the community I was with were talking about the condition of the Church. The question came, "What is the great need of the Church and believers?" There was a godly member among us who had much experience in training ministers, and the question was given to him. He answered very quietly, simply, and determinedly:

"Absolute surrender to God is the one thing."

I was struck by his answer. And he went on to tell us that with all the workers he had trained, those who were absolutely surrendered to God, even if they were completely wrong on all else, were willing to be taught and always improved. Those who had everything right but were not fully surrendered very often could not be helped and would leave ministry. The condition for obtaining God's full blessing is absolute surrender.

And so I desire, by God's grace, to give you a message from God. God answers the prayers which we offer for blessing on ourselves and on those around us by one demand: Are you willing to surrender yourself absolutely into God's hands? What will your answer be? There are many hearts who have said it, many more who long to say it but do not dare to. And there are many hearts who have said it but have miserably failed, and feel condemned by their failure to find the secret power to live a surrendered life. May God have a word for all these hearts!

Monday's Reflection:

What is your answer to Murray's question in the final paragraph? Which group of "hearts" do you identify yourself in? Which would you like to be in?

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Tuesday's Reading

God Expects Your Surrender

God claims absolute surrender from us. It is God's very nature and God cannot do otherwise. Who is God? God is the Fountain of Life, the only SOURCE of existence and power and goodness. There is nothing good but what God works. God created the whole universe and all its parts. Is it not all completely surrendered to God? Do they not work just as God has been pleased to design them? So do you consider that God's children can flourish apart from God? Or half surrendered? God cannot do it. God is life, love, blessing, power, and infinite beauty. God delights to share himself with every child who is prepared to receive God. It is just this one thing that God allows himself to be hindered, the lack of absolute surrender. But now God comes and, as God, claims it.

You know from your own experience the need of absolute surrender. When you use a pen, that pen is absolutely surrendered to the one work of writing. And that pen must be fully surrendered to your hand to write properly. Imagine another attempting to hold on to the pen while you write. It would be a struggle to write, if it can even be done. You can apply this to everything in your life and see the role of absolute surrender every day.

Now think of your very life and purpose in the divine nature that you have received from God's life giving salvation. Can God work his will if you are not entirely given up to God's will? God cannot. Solomon's temple is an example to us. It was completely surrendered to God in its dedication. And you are a temple of God, in which God will dwell and work mightily on just one condition—absolute surrender to God. God claims it, God is worthy of it, and without surrender God cannot work his blessed work in us.

Tuesday's Reflection:

What ways are you holding onto the pen in God's hand as God writes your story? Reflect, ask God to reveal it to you. Write what God reveals below.

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Wednesday's Reading

God Accomplishes Your Surrender

God not only claims it, but God will also make your surrender happen. I am sure many reading this will even say, "Absolute surrender is impossible!" They may say, "I have already gone through so many trials and suffering but there is so much of the self-life still alive in me. I don't think I can face giving it completely up because I know it will cause even more trouble and agony."

Would we have such cruel thoughts of God? I bring those of you with fear and anxiety a hopeful message. God does not ask for absolute surrender to be done in your strength or by your will. God is willing to do the work in you! Paul says to the Philippians, "for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure." (*Phil. 2:13*) And that is how we should seek God. We go humbly until our hearts learn to believe that the very Creator of all things will come in to transform us and conquer what is evil in us to do His good will.

Consider those we see in the Old Testament, like Abraham. Was it an accident that God found him? The one true faithful friend of God? And that it was Abraham, apart from God, who had such faith, obedience and devotion? You know it is not so. God raised him up and prepared him as an instrument for His glory. And if God did that with Abraham, will God not also do it for those who are called sons and daughters of Abraham?

I want to encourage you and hope you cast away every fear. Come with even a feeble desire. And if there is a fear that says, "My desire is not strong enough. I am not willing for everything that may come. I do not feel bold enough to say I can conquer everything." I pray you learn to know and trust your God now. Try praying this, "*My God, I am willing for you to make me willing.*" If there is anything holding you back, any sacrifice you are afraid of making, come to God now and prove how gracious your God is. Be not afraid that God will command from you what God will not also give you the strength to do.

God offers to do this work of absolute surrender in you. All the longings you have in your heart that are unfulfilled, they are God drawing you to himself in Jesus Christ. He lived a life of absolute surrender. And he has possession of you, living in your heart by his Holy Spirit. You may have resisted him in the past but he desires to help you get hold of him entirely. And he draws you near with all his words. Will you come and trust God to work in you absolute surrender to himself? Blessed is the God who can and will do it!

Wednesday's Practice:

Pray today throughout the day the prayer Murray gives in the fourth paragraph, "*My God, I am willing for you to make me willing.*" Picture yourself handing your whole life to God as you pray this.

Surrender 101

Thursday's Reading

God Accepts Your Surrender

God not only claims it and works it, but God accepts it when we bring it to Him. God works it in the secret of our heart, God urges us by the hidden power of God's Holy Spirit to come and give to Him absolute surrender. But remember, when you come and bring God absolute surrender, you may feel it is a thing of great imperfection, and you may doubt and hesitate and say, "Is it absolute?" Remember there was once a man to whom Christ had said, "All things can be done for the one who believes." (*Mark 9:23b*) Immediately the man cried out, "I believe; help my unbelief!"

The man's faith reigned victorious over the devil, and the evil spirit was cast out of him. If you come and say, "Lord, I give myself in absolute surrender to you," even with a trembling heart and lack of confidence, God will hear. Do not fear. Come just as you are, and even in your trembling, the power of the Holy Spirit will work.

Have you not heard or learned that the Holy Spirit works with mighty power, even when human nature is feeble? Look at the Lord Jesus in Gethsemane. We read in Hebrews that he, "through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God" (*Heb. 9:14b*). It was God's Spirit that enabled Jesus to surrender. Consider the agony, fear, and sorrow that came over him, and yet he prayed! Externally it seemed the power of the Spirit was absent but the Spirit of God was there. Even so, when you are feeble, fighting, and trembling, have faith in God's hidden work in the Spirit and do not fear, surrender yourself.

When you do give yourself in absolute surrender, trust that God accepts it. That is the point! And we so often miss it—that believers should be occupied with God in the matter of surrender. My hope is that you be occupied with God. We all seek help so that God may be made clearer to us in our daily lives. That God will be made all in all in us. If we are going to have that, let us begin by looking away from ourselves and up to God. Come to God trembling, full of failure, sin, and fear, bow down and accept God's terms of absolute surrender. While you plead for blessings for yourself and others, accept God's terms. While you do this in deep silence, remember God, the Creator of all things, is present and takes note of it. God writes it down in his book and at that very moment takes possession of you. You may not feel it, you may not realize it, but God takes possession if you cast yourself in trust on him.

Thursday's Practice

Come just as you are before God as you start your day, and accept God's terms of absolute surrender. In whatever feeble way you can, offer yourself completely to God. Look through your calendar and give all your plans today to God, hour by hour.

Surrender 101

Friday's Reading

God Maintains Your Surrender

God not only claims it, and works it, and accepts it when I bring it, but God maintains it. That is the struggle of so many. You may have been stirred at a meeting and given yourself to God, but it faded. You believe it may last a short while but will eventually leave. It is because you do not believe what I am now going to remind you. When God began the work of absolute surrender in you, and accepted your surrender, it is God who holds himself bound to care for your surrender and keep it. Will you allow yourself to believe that?

In the matter of surrender there are two; God and I. I am nothing and God is the everlasting omnipotent source of creation. Will we be afraid to trust ourselves to this mighty God now? God is willing. Do you not believe that God can keep you continually, day by day, moment by moment?

If God sustains the sun to shine daily, will God not also let his light shine on you every moment? Why have you not experienced it before? Because you have not trusted God for it, you are still holding onto the pen in God's hand trying to write your own story.

I do not deny that a life of absolute surrender has its difficulties. Even more, it is a life impossible for human strength. But by the grace of God, by the power of God and God's Spirit dwelling in us, it is a life we are destined to have, praise God! Let us believe that God will maintain it.

A life like that has two sides; 1) absolute surrender to work what God wants you to do, and 2) to let God work what God wants to do.

Give yourselves absolutely to the will of God. You might know a little of that will, definitely not all. But say to God, "By your grace I desire to do your will in everything, every moment of every day. Not a word on my tongue but for your glory. Not a movement of my temper but for your glory. Not an feeling of love or hate in my heart but for your glory and according to your blessed will."

Someone might ask, "Do you think it's possible?" I ask, What has God promised you, and what can God do to fill a vessel absolutely surrendered to Him? God wants to bless you in a way beyond what you expect. From the beginning, "no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him." (*Isaiah 64:4*) God has prepared unimaginable blessings. Divine blessings!

Friday's Practice:

Pray this earnestly to God today, "I give myself absolutely to you, to your will, to do only what you want. I give myself absolutely to you, to let you work in me to will and to do of your good pleasure, as you have promised to do."

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Saturday's Reading

God Blesses When You Surrender

This absolute surrender to God will wonderfully bless. If Ahab can say this his enemy, King Ben-hadad, "As you say, my lord, O king, I am yours, and all that I have."—shall we not also say it to our loving God and Father? When we do, God's blessing will come on us. God calls us out from the world that hates God to say, "Lord anything for you." If you say that in prayer, God will accept it and will teach you what it means.

You have often prayed for blessings. But remember, there must be absolute surrender. Consider the tea cup. Why is tea poured in the cup? Because it is empty and surrendered to be filled with tea. Put ink, or vinegar, or wine into it and will you then pour tea in it? It is the same with you and God. God desires to fill you and bless you but you must be absolutely surrendered to be filled. Let us believe God has wonderful blessings for us if we surrender. Say with a believing heart, *"O God, I accept your demands. I am yours and all that I have. Absolute surrender is what my soul gives to you by divine grace."*

You may not feel salvation as clearly as you want to, but humble yourself in God's sight. Acknowledge that you have grieved God's Spirit by your self-will, self-confidence, and self-effort. Bow humbly before God in confession and ask God to break your heart before him. As you bow, accept God teaching that living solely in the limitation of ourselves, there is no good thing, we need another life to come upon us. You must deny self once for all and every moment, then Christ will come in and take possession of you.

We must bow before God in humility and confess the state of the whole Church. Earnest Christians are not living a life in the power of God or to God's glory. How much Christian work is being done in the spirit of the flesh and in the power of self! How much work, day by day, in which human energy—our will and our thoughts about the work—is continually manifested, and in which there is little waiting on God, and the power of the Holy Spirit! Let us begin the confession. Let us begin the absolute surrender required for God's filling and blessing.

Death was the path to glory for Christ. For the "joy that was set before him endured the cross" (*Heb. 12:2b*). The cross was the birthplace of His everlasting glory. Do you love Christ? Do you long to be in Christ? Let death be to you the most desirable thing on earth—death to self, and fellowship with Christ.

Come and cast this self-life and flesh-life at the feet of Jesus. Then trust him. Do not worry yourselves with trying to understand all about it, but come in the living faith that Christ will come into you with the power of His death and the power of His life. Then the Holy Spirit will bring the whole Christ—Christ crucified, risen, and living in glory—into your heart.

Saturday's Practice:

Pour a cup of tea and meditate on what it means to be filled with God for blessings.