

Seeking Revival

DAY 3 — SURRENDER IS THE KEY

“Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship” (Romans 12:1, NIV).

My Journey

I was a businessman, age 36, when a friend who was a pastor suddenly passed away at age 41. This brought the question to my mind: What would happen if God called me to be a pastor? I did not want this at all. For a whole week I fought bitterly and negotiated with God—morning, noon, and night. I explained to Him how I could serve Him other ways. Apparently He was not hearing my objections, and as I knelt by my bed with no further arguments, a quiet thought entered my mind: *God loves you!* And I thought, *Yes, I believe this.*

After a few minutes, trust in God’s love led me to completely surrender myself. Then I was at peace. And one and a half years later, the Lord did call me to become a pastor. Years later, I am still so grateful to Him. It was His endless love and wisdom that showed me a completely different way than what I had in mind. Now I see that this surrender released great blessings in my life. God led me the best possible way.

Why Surrender?

As Garrie F. Williams writes, “Full surrender is the key to salvation, to rebirth, to victory over sin and temptation, and to fullness of the Holy Spirit” (*How to be Filled With the Holy Spirit and Know It*). We cannot emphasize this encouraging message enough.

Just as I had to surrender before God could fully use me, so the apostle Paul had to give up his old life and plans when God called him on the road to Damascus. In his letter to the Romans, Paul later urged believers to “offer your bodies as a living sacrifice” and “offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness” (Romans 12:1; 6:13, NIV).

Many have not surrendered themselves to God (often out of ignorance) but instead have taken their lives into their own hands. They lack the power of the Holy Spirit, which is the gift that brings forth all of God’s other gifts. “But like every other promise, it is given on conditions. There are many who believe and profess to claim the Lord’s promise; they talk *about* Christ and *about* the Holy Spirit, yet receive no benefit. They do not surrender the soul to be guided and controlled by the divine agencies” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 672).

As humans we resist giving up our freedom, but God’s desire for us is the opposite: “God desires to heal us, to set us free. But since this requires an entire transformation, a renewing of our whole nature, we must yield ourselves wholly to Him” (*Steps to Christ*, p. 43).

A life of sin is not as free as we like to imagine. “Every soul that refuses to give himself to God is under the control of another power. He is not his own. He may talk of freedom, but he is in the most abject slavery. He is not allowed to see the beauty of truth, for his mind is under the control of Satan. While he flatters himself that he is following the dictates of his own judgment, he obeys the will of the prince of darkness. Christ came to break the shackles of sin-slavery from the soul” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 466).

What do we lose by surrendering to Christ? He is able to free us from the tyranny of ourselves—from envy, resentment, quarrelsomeness, greed, addiction, anger, pride, conceit, discouragement, inferiority complexes, and more. Remember, every human being is his or her own biggest problem. *You* are your own biggest problem. “In the change that takes place when the soul surrenders to Christ, there is the highest sense of freedom” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 466).

But a potter can only work with the clay that is in his hands. That's why we offer ourselves to God. "The surrender of all our powers to God greatly simplifies the problem of life. It weakens and cuts short a thousand struggles with the passions of the natural heart" (*My Life Today*, p. 6).

Only surrender leads to lasting joy. "Those who take Christ at His word, and surrender their souls to His keeping, their lives to His ordering, will find peace and quietude. Nothing of the world can make them sad when Jesus makes them glad by His presence. In perfect acquiescence there is perfect rest" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 331). He invites you today to experience that perfect rest!

Praying God's Word

Make us instruments of Your love.

"Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness" (Romans 6:13, NIV).

Lord, we want to give You every part of our lives. Use us as instruments for Your glory.

Make our lives an act of worship.

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship" (Romans 12:1, NIV).

Father, thank You so much for inviting us to become new creations. Show us how to surrender daily to You without any restrictions. Help us follow you in all things by Your strength.

Protect us from the evil one.

"We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning, but he who was born of God protects him, and the evil one does not touch him" (1 John 5:18, ESV).

Lord, thank You for promising to protect us from the evil one when we are surrendered to You. Lead us on Your path to perfect joy.

More Prayer Suggestions

Thanks and Praise: Give thanks for specific blessings and praise God for His goodness.

Confession: Take a few minutes for private confession and thank God for His forgiveness.

Guidance: Ask God to grant wisdom for current challenges and decisions.

Our Church: Ask God to bless the efforts of our local, regional, and world church.

Local Requests: Pray for current needs of church members, family, and neighbors.

Listen and Respond: Take time to listen for God's voice and respond in praise or song.

Song Suggestions

SDA Hymnal: I Surrender All (#309); Have Thine Own Way, Lord (#567); Take My Life and Let It Be (#330); Under His Wings (#529); It Is Well (#530); Just as I Am (#313).