

Surrender

Let's take on the word *surrender*. First let us note that surrender is no small thing. In the Christian doctrine Surrender is also noted as one of the three columns of victorious living, or Christian victory. It is literally turning one's self over to the will of something greater than self and in our case, that greatness is God.

Unity has long presented the delusion that in order to live the perfect life we must be in control. We call ourselves co-creators with God. We claim the ability to do great physical things by affirmation alone (fake it 'til you make it) or say it long enough and it will become true yet most things we claim over and over and over again seldom do come true. This is not a bad thing but looked at from an enlightened view we can see that there just might be another way. We must recognize that we of ourselves can do nothing and accept the help of our God. This help does not make us weak but it makes us stronger for if we realize that it is God, who does the works.

Jesus said, in **John 14:10** *"Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work."*

How simple. The greatest power there is, in Truth, the only power there is, lies within each of us as the Christ within and the greatest barrier to that power is also within each of us as the ego of our intellect. We realize the power of surrender when we realize that to surrender is not to give up control but to be in control of our lives through the righteous thinking given us by God and through the perfect teachings and guidance given us by Jesus Christ.

The Scripture of the Holy Bible gives us many teachings about the power of surrender.

There are three main tenets to the Christian doctrine of surrender;

1. The surrender of self. The complete emptying of false beliefs and preconceived notions that cause us to be something that we are not. I like to call this the salad bowl syndrome. It goes something like this:
 - a. When we are born we come directly from God with all of the knowing of right and wrong we will need upon which to build our life here on Earth. We are ready for input and it is the quality of the input we get that determines the dilution of our natural born traits of good which in turn yields the quality of our lives. We are as an empty salad bowl perfectly created for our life experiences and unfortunately unable to govern the quality or consistency of our input. Then here comes Mom and she drops in a few sliced tomatoes and some iceberg lettuce and we are now a garden salad. Then here comes Dad who drops in a few black olives and some peppers and we become a sort of antipasto. Now Grandma enters and drops in some goat cheese and garlic and we then become a Greek salad. The dressing makes us something else and pretty soon we have had so much added to us that the conglomeration in our salad bowl makes us nothing.
 - b. Werner H. Erhard said something like this, “Until you realize that what you are is empty and meaningless, you don’t know anything and what you do know, you only know to an end.” What he is saying is that in the beginning we are empty and through default we become meaningless because the different ingredients we have taken in from parents, teachers, ministers and peers is never the whole story.
 - c. The trick is to become our own salad and we do this by emptying our bowl. By releasing the error thought given us and establishing ourselves in God and we establish ourselves in God by yielding to the mighty Love, Grace and Presence of the Almighty in every part of our lives and in the affairs of our lives.

St. Paul gave us the most comforting instructions when he said, in Romans 12:1-3, *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.”*

2. The second tenet is the act described by Paul in **Philippians 1:21**, *“For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.”* It is the act of the dying of our self nature to allow Christ to take our place within us and to live through us. It is the putting aside of all our worldly thoughts, possessions and habits so that we experience the death of ourselves.
 - a. Jesus gave the following examples of surrender of self and worldly ideas as He gathered his disciples:

Matthew 8: 21-23 - Another disciple said to him, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." But Jesus told him, *"Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead."*

Matthew 16: 24 - Then Jesus said to his disciples, *"If anyone would come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me."*

Matthew 19:21 - Jesus answered, *"If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow Me."*

It is our focus and commitment to God, to the Living Christ and to the denial of those things not of God that will give us the power of God in our lives and affairs.

3. The third and most courageous of the tenets is for us to surrender by emulating the surrender of Christ by His first coming into the world as God in the flesh and then His surrender to death on the Cross in sacrificial atonement breaking the bond of death to humankind.

How does the act of surrender apply in Practical Christianity?

Surrender is the very power that allows Practical Christianity to work at all. The lack of surrender implies that we are yet attempting to control our lives rather than, through the guidance of God, being *in* control of our lives. There is a very subtle but powerful difference between the act of control and of being in control. We control our lives, though not very well, through self will, we are in control of our lives by surrendering to the Christ within allowing Christ to live through us.