**Obey God or Rebel Your Choice**

**By Pastor Fee Soliven**

**Hebrews 13:15-17**

**Sunday Morning**

**March 8, 2020**

**Hebrews 13:15-17**

15 Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. 16 But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. 17 Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.

**To the best of your knowledge, are you fully surrendered to Our Lord Jesus Christ?**

If He is your Savior and Lord, then this should be your wholehearted response. Although we all love the comfort of knowing that we are saved and our names are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life, there should also be progress in every area of our lives through a surrendered and obedient life to the will of God.

**A Surrendered life begins at Salvation**

**Proverbs 22:4-5**

“By humility and the fear of the LORD Are riches and honor and life. 5 Thorns and snares are in the way of the perverse; He who guards his soul will be far from them”

**Romans 6:12-14**

12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. 13 And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. 14 For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

Saints, we must recognize that there is nothing we can do to save our souls but must wholly trust in Jesus who bore our sins and paid the penalty we deserved. It’s ironic that we surrender our souls to His authority for salvation yet try to control other areas of our lives.

**Ephesians 2:8-10**

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Saints, if Jesus is our Savior, and we acknowledge Him as Lord God, then we should also realize that He is the Lord of our lives as well. Yet many Christians resist full surrender to Jesus because it seems too costly, too demanding.

**1 Peter 4:17-19**

17 For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? 18 Now "If the righteous one is scarcely saved, Where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?" 19 Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.

Saints, it’s not like surrendering to another person because when we yield ourselves to God, it includes every area of our lives—even the things hidden deep within our hearts. Yet this absolute surrender is exactly what God expects because Christ died for us, and we belong to Him.

**Full Surrender is God’s perfect will for our Lives**

**Romans 12:1-2**

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

However Saints, the application of this principle looks different for each believer. What one person finds easy to release to the Lord, someone else may not. But we can each sense what He is asking us personally to relinquish. It’s a conviction or that “thing” that keeps cropping up when we pray. It may be a bad attitude or habit, or it could be something that isn’t sinful but is not presently part of God’s will for our lives.

**Jesus Christ is the perfect example of Full Surrender**

Jesus always did the will of His Father, yet toward the end of His life, He struggled to surrender in the Garden of Gethsemane. As He withdrew from His disciples, He prayed,

**Luke 22:42**

“Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done”

Saints, Jesus knew that He had come to die for the sins of mankind, and being fully God, He foresaw all that awaited Him as He suffered on the cross and bore the Father’s punishment for our sins.

**2 Corinthians 5:21**

“For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him”

His distress demonstrates that surrender is not always easy and can be excruciating, yet He never wavered from complete obedience to His Father’s will. There was no other way to accomplish the salvation of mankind. Therefore, Jesus offered Himself fully to the Father and bore the penalty for our sins.

**Philippians 2:5-8**

5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

**This is the same kind of attitude we should have—not my will, but Yours be done**

In a military sense surrender means defeat, but for a follower of Jesus it means victory over whatever is hindering our Christian life. It may require that we ask God to search our hearts and reveal any areas we’ve kept for ourselves.

**2 Corinthians 13:4-6**

4 For though He was crucified in weakness, yet He lives by the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by the power of God toward you. 5 Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?--unless indeed you are disqualified. 6 But I trust that you will know that we are not disqualified.

Saints, then as He brings something to mind, we relinquish it to Him. Once we’ve trusted Jesus as our Savior, we must recognize that we now belong to Him. Full surrender is like opening the closets of our lives and inviting Him to clean out whatever He wants. To try to keep parts of our lives to ourselves only hinders our walk with Him. Yet we often rationalize, saying,

**“This one little thing isn’t that important. After all, no one is perfect. We all have our weaknesses so God will understand.”**

But that’s not how the Lord operates.

**What does it mean to yield ourselves to God?**

It requires that we open our hearts and lives to the Lord, asking Him to take out whatever does not please Him. We must be willing to confess, repent, walk away, give it up, and lay it down. Until we do, we will never become the person He wants us to be or enjoy His blessings.

**1 John 1:5-10**

5 This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. 6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. 8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

It’s easy to paint a pretty picture of Christianity that leaves out the cost of surrender. We rejoice in answered prayer, the promises of Scripture, the security of our salvation, and heartfelt praise. But none of these are a substitute for wholehearted obedience and surrender to God.

To be a disciple of Christ means every aspect of our lives is given to Him, and it’s evident in our conduct, conversation, and character.

**John 14:15-18**

15 "If you love Me, keep My commandments. 16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever-- 17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. 18 I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

**John 15:4-8**

4 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

5 I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.

7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. 8 By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

**What would happen if we gave ourselves fully to God?**

He delights to work in our lives when we recognize Him as Lord. Such surrender affects our prayers, generosity, conversations, attitudes, families, workplaces, and interactions with those who don’t know Christ.

**Galatians 5:22-25**

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. 24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

**How would God respond if we yielded ourselves to Him?**

Some people resist surrendering to God because they fear He’ll take someone or something from them. The problem with this kind of thinking is that it’s based on a faulty idea of who God is. He isn’t waiting for us to raise a white flag so He can swoop down to do something horrible to us.

**2 Timothy 1:7**

“For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind”

This is our loving heavenly Father, who is generous and kind in His blessings. He wants us to enjoy a close relationship with Him, which is only possible for those who trust and obey Him. The Christian life is living under the leadership of the Lord Jesus, who always does what is best.

**John 6:37-40**

37 All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. 38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

39 This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. 40 And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

**John 10:26-30**

26 But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you. 27 My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. 28 And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.

29 My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. 30 I and My Father are one."

Although we may want freedom from sickness, sorrow, and heartache, the Lord sometimes uses these hardships to remove whatever is hindering our relationship with Him. If we want to become the person He desires us to be, we must trust and submit to His lordship.

**What is hindering total surrender?**

**Is it a person, a possession, a way of life, a habit**?

Saints, the only way to discover what God could do in our lives is to let go of anything that He says is not best for us.

**2 Corinthians 5:7**

“For we walk by faith, not by sight”

Although we may think we know better, we can never improve on His plan for our lives. We never lose by yielding to the Lord. In fact, that’s when life at its best begins.

**What changes do we need to make?**

**1. We must stop rationalizing and excusing our lack of submission to God.**

**2. Trust God. He only does what is best and always keeps His word. He will not deny us anything He’s promised.**

**3. Remember that the safest place to be is in subjection to Him.**

**4. Surrender today, tomorrow, and every day because it’s a lifelong practice that will continue until we meet the Lord in heaven.**

**In Closing:**

**1. What are you holding onto that God is asking you to release?**

**2. What’s keeping you from surrendering it?**

**3. Are you afraid to surrender to God? If so, why?**

**5. What could you lose by surrendering?**

**5. What could you gain?**

**6. Which one has eternal ramifications?**

**Let’s Pray**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace.” In Jesus Name!**