



A Surrendered Life

Recovery is about living a surrendered life. The first three steps are especially about surrender:

1. I can't,
2. God can,
3. So, I'll let Him!

Life-controlling problems such as alcohol or drug abuse are only manifestations of a deeper underlying cause. The real issue is self-centeredness. Self-centeredness is when we insist on being in control of our own lives and carrying out our own plans in our own strength and wisdom. Maybe Jesus is resident in your life, but not President.

The problem with this approach is that it doesn't work — and God never intended anyone to live this way. Some people seem to get away with it for a while, but it eventually leads to emptiness and brokenness.

God intended us to live in fellowship with Him in all that we do. He has a plan for our lives and providentially orchestrates our circumstances to provide all the wisdom, time, energy, resources, and power needed to carry out His plan.

Seemingly well-adjusted people may appear to cope well without God being in control of their lives. However, in the end they discover that everything done apart from the Lord lacks true purpose and meaning. Some never find real peace and joy because their stubborn self-sufficiency resists the blessings of the Lord.

In a sense, dysfunctional people are fortunate that they *can't* manage their own lives. It forces us to turn to the Lord, who restores us to the way He originally intended us to live. It is the easier, softer way — God is the One who does the work; we simply go along for the ride.

God does not call us to perform for Him. He calls us to be yielded (surrendered) to Him, and *He* performs through us. *"I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."* (John 15:5 NIV) *"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."* (Gal. 2:20 NIV)

When we learn to live a surrendered life, we are generally happy, joyous, and free, experiencing the fruit of the Spirit. A self-centered life eventually produces "fruits of the flesh" such as anxiety, depression, anger, worry, doubts, fears, inferiority, insecurity, and inadequacy. Not a pretty way to live.

It would seem the choice is simple — misery or happiness. Who would knowingly choose a self-defeating, self-destructive approach to life? God created us as objects of His love. Above all, He wants us to be in fellowship with Him so He can love us. *God is love*. I encourage you to offer (surrender) yourself as a living sacrifice and allow the Lord to bless you beyond your hopes and dreams.



Surrender Agreement

Lord Jesus, I confess that I have been trying to live the Christian life in accordance with my own strength, my own power, and my own resources. I admit that Your Word is true — that apart from You I can do nothing that means anything from an eternal perspective.

I want to be restored to a right relationship with You and a right relationship with the people You intend to be part of my life. I want to do things Your way. Please bring me to the end of myself and the end of this empty and meaningless way of living.

Your Word says in Romans 12:1–2: *“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.”*

I see now that what is required is a one-hundred-percent, without-reservation, absolute, complete, and irrevocable surrender to Your loving guidance.

Right now, I agree to cooperate with You and totally surrender to You — to do with me as You see fit. From this day forward, carry out **Your** plan for my life and not mine or anyone else's.

Lord, I surrender my **past** to You — all that I did, all that I was, and all that I had. Lord, I surrender my **present** to You — all that I am, all that I have, all that I do, and all the people who are in my life. Lord, I surrender my **future** to You — all I will be, all I will do, all I will have, and all the people who will be in my life.

Lord, to the extent You desire my cooperation, I give You permission to do everything in me, to me, through me, and around me that You intend — and I believe by faith that You will.

I understand that from this day forward I have no decisions to make — only a few simple instructions to follow. I expect You to lead me by Your Spirit and to be in control of my life from this day forth. Even when I am confused about Your will, I trust by faith that You will cause it to come to pass through Your providential control.

Signed _____ Date _____

See Pg. 25 in the Reaching Out to a Hurting World workbook for a “Total Surrender Contract.”