

The Meaning of Surrender

Surrender means losing the right to handle yourself

To surrender means to give everything up to the Lord. Lay it all down. Lose the right over yourself, both the "bad" self and the "good" self. Surrender means you lose your right to handle yourself on your own. In the middle of everything, lose and forfeit your rights to the Lord. Do not move. Freeze right where you are. Do not do anything. Surrender yourself just the way you are. By all means, do not fix yourself. Do not try in yourself to get it together. If you get it together, that means you are the savior. Do not try to work what is dead back up into life, like trying to massage a heart that has stopped beating. You cannot squeeze life out of the region of death inside of you. Life must come from the outside. In resurrection, Christ as the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit. Life originates from Him. So we must let Christ inject life into our dead condition. We must receive the life. We must allow resurrection life to give life to our mortal bodies (Rom. 8:11).

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Surrendering is not merely a once-and-for-all experience. It is continuous, day by day. When our soul-life is struggling to live and preserve itself, that is a call to a deeper fellowship with the Lord. It means more opening to Him, more interacting with Him in the Spirit. Surrendering is not an ascetic practice of the self denying the self. It is an interruption of the motions of the soul-life to contact Christ and enjoy Him. We lose the soul-life by the one, unique act of faith – turning to Jesus. And, it is by this that we find our soul-life. We find the repose of all our faculties. We find rest to our souls (Matt. 11:28-30). Our soul only exists for Christ – to contain Him, to be filled with Him, and to express Him. His resurrection life that has passed through every battle and conquered death itself now becomes our portion.

Surrender means coming to Christ just as you are

Are you a surrendered person? To surrender means simply to stop right where you are and let the Lord have everything. Give up and turn everything over to Him. Come to Him just as you are. The Lord's words in Matthew 11:28 are so

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precious: "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden." The word "labor" is in the present tense and can be translated "all you who are laboring." It means you are under the inward effort of trying to overcome either this thought or that feeling or trying to deal with a certain environment. You are just laboring. There is a standard in your mind of what you know you should be, and then there is the real you. When you start comparing the real you with the standard, you immediately begin toiling and laboring over your condition. If this is your case, then the Lord's words are for you. All those who are laboring and are heavy laden are invited to come to Him.

"Heavy laden" is in the perfect tense, which means this is a state or chronic condition that one lives with. The Lord is saying, "Come to Me, all you who are in the middle of a chronic condition." You are living in a state of being weighed down because of the accumulation of cares, anxieties, and accusations that have piled up on you under your religious system. It is a religious system that relies upon itself, that is expecting something from itself. It is expecting a better performance, a better track record. When you do not meet up to your

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expectations, you are disappointed, and the result is that you are weighed down. You are weighed down not because the Lord has weighed you down, not because He has imposed something upon you, but because you are carrying within you a religious system of self-expectation.

This means that any of us, with our religious backgrounds, may take what we hear and filter it through our religious system. Then we fall into an inward laboring coupled with an accumulation of heavy burdens sitting on our conscience. But if this is our case, the Lord says, "Come to Me, all you who are in the middle of that and feel the weight of that." And He says, "I will rest you." He does not say, "I will give you rest," as the King James Version translates it, but "I will rest you." To say "give" implies that the Lord is going to give us a gift of rest, something detached from Himself. This would be like handing us some kind of objective, impersonal thing. Then, we would have it on a plate, so to speak, and be very careful with it because we would want to preserve the rest. But the word "give" is not in the original language. Many of the different translations bring out exactly what the Greek says: "Come to Me, all you who

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labor and are heavy laden and I will rest you." I will rest you. This means "I am the One that does the resting of your soul-life. And you will find rest to your souls."

This is a relationship with the Lord in which He Himself is resting us – "I will rest you." This is what He does in the middle of everything. He wants to be the One who handles our weak and tired-out souls. Even the emphasis in the original is "I, I Myself, will rest you." Also, the Greek word for "come" means more than just the usual word for come. It means "Come now, come quick." It means to come in the midst of some kind of environment, in the middle of something, indicating that the Lord senses the urgency of relieving us of our laboring and heavy condition. He is saying, "Come quick! I will rest you." Isn't that precious? Has He been doing this in your experience? Let Him pat your cheek. Lie on His breast, call on His name, open to Him, complain to Him, talk to Him, lay everything on Him. Do not handle anything yourself. Just handle Him. Come to Him. Open up and pour out to Him, and He will rest you. This is our resurrected Christ. He is present and available for us to come to Him

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anytime – all the time.

When Christ happens, the church happens

We have to see how marvelous is the resurrected Christ. Today the church is a dynamic event because of resurrection. The church happens as we are interacting with the resurrected Christ. We are touching Him, drawing from Him, and singing to Him. He is happening. And when He happens, the church happens. The church is an event of resurrection life. The church is not an institution. The church is not a physical building. The church is not a form. The church is not a service. The church is a happening. It is the happening of resurrection life. Even the Greek word for church, *ekklesia*, means assembly. There is a dynamic in the word "assembly." It means a gathering of all the members of Christ who are alive in resurrection. To be gathered together into His name means to be gathered together into the resurrected Christ, who is transmitting all His fullness into us. In our union with Him we are enjoying everything that He is. And when this enjoyment happens in the Body, then whenever we

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come together as the church, it is the assembly of an event. It is the gathering of a happening – the happening of resurrection. And that is the Lord Himself.

If we do not gather with the Lord Himself, then we have to have a program. We need entertainment. We must come up with a method. We have to find a way to keep "the church" going. But thank God, if the resurrected Christ is not present, this thing called "the church" falls like a tent in a tornado. Down it goes, like a punctured balloon. And this is as it should be. Let it be down so that resurrection life could be breathed into its deadness, just as the dead, dry bones were breathed into in Ezekiel 37. Deadness is better than performance, because deadness provides the necessary condition for resurrection life to happen. Performance only covers up deadness, pretending to be something that it is not. Resurrection life does not come to performance. It comes to deadness. Just admit the deadness and get resurrected.

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The beginning of the church

The church came into existence at the resurrection of Christ. Thus, the church is just the extension of the resurrected Christ. Now in resurrection Christ has taken on the form of Head of His organic Body, the church. Colossians 1:18-19 says, 18 "And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things; 19 for in Him all the fullness was pleased to dwell." Verse 18 speaks of Christ as "the Head of the Body, the church," and as "Firstborn from the dead." This reveals to us that He is the Head in resurrection. Not only so, but He is also "the beginning." That is, He is the beginning of the church. The church started with the resurrection of Christ. The church has no beginning apart from Christ in resurrection. This means that there was no such thing as an organic, living Body until the Lord rose from the dead with all of us as His members. There was no such thing as the church, in the New Testament sense of the Body of Christ, until He rose from the dead. When He came out of the tomb, when He rose from the dead, we were in

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Him, we were with Him. We were raised together with Him (Eph. 2:5-6). This was the beginning of the church. Resurrection life, including Head and Body, was the beginning of the church.

On the day of resurrection the Lord breathed into the disciples and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit" (John 20:22). This means "Receive Me in My new resurrected form – the Holy Spirit (John 14:16-20). Let Me breathe Myself into you." This is the resurrected Christ breathing the church into existence. Thus, it is resurrection that makes the church possible.

Resurrection life takes the form of ekklesia, an assembly. This does not mean merely a gathering at 9:30 on Sunday morning or at 7:00 on Wednesday night. It does not mean just a time of coming together. No, the church is an assembling of the members of the resurrected Christ together into His name (Matt. 18:20). So the church is an event. It is a happening. It is dynamic. It is not in the way we arrange the chairs. It is not in the way we have a meeting. It is not in the outward forms. It is in how much the members of the Body are interacting with the resurrected Christ, their living Head. This is the church.

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Give Him the first place to untie all the knots

The church may happen in many different ways. It is not always going to be the same way. The church is a breaking out of resurrection life. So the content of the church is just this resurrected Christ. Apart from this resurrected Christ, we are just on the level of a community club or a special interest group. We are just an organization. But the church is Christ alive in us. That is why in our experience only one thing is necessary, and that is to give Him first place. Let Him be the One doing everything, solving everything, untying all the knots. There are some of us who have a few knots. You know about those kinds of knots – you work and work and work on them. And even if you use a needle to try to get in the crevices, it is difficult to untie them. Some of us are worse than that. We are knots. We cannot untie our inward parts. Some of us have a persistent kind of nature. We say, "I am going to conquer this thing. I do not care how long it takes me." And we are there sweating and waiting for this thing to get untied. You know how that is. It is like me trying to fix my computer when my son is standing right there, willing and

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able to fix it. I am struggling to fix it, until I finally relent and humble myself to my son and let him do it. Let the Lord untie your knots!

What a Christ! In everything He has the first place. Give Him the first place. Colossians 1:18 does not say, "Be better." It does not say, "Undo your knots." It does not say, "You solve the problem." No, it says, "In all things give Him the first place." This is why it is so critical that we know how to touch Jesus, how to lay hold of Him. It is critical for us to know how to open our mouth and call upon His name. I do not mean a religious exercise – going through so many kinds of activities – but just a simple, instant laying hold of our living Head.

*The form of Christ in resurrection is as a
life-giving Spirit*

The form the Lord took in His resurrection is a form in which we can easily touch Him. We can touch Him even if we are upside down, if we are in the lowest pit (Lam. 3:55-56). We can touch Him because of the form He became in resurrection. That form is a life-giving Spirit. It is breath, the

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very breath of God. We can just breathe Him. First Corinthians 15:45 says it clearly: "the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit." Christ Himself is the last Adam. This means all of humanity, all human virtue, every proper human thing, has been summed up in Him. "The last Adam" means that there are no more Adams to be found. Do not look any other place. You do not need to go to anything else – any person or any philosophy or any thing. Christ is the last Adam. He is the summation of all proper humanity. He is the proper husband, the proper wife, the proper parent, the proper child, the proper employee, the proper citizen – the proper human being. Now, by becoming a life-giving Spirit, the last Adam has made His humanity with all its proper virtues available for us to participate in.

As the last Adam, the Lord did not live just 2,000 years ago. We are not left with trying to remember how He lived when He was on earth. It is not a matter of asking ourselves questions such as, "What would Jesus do here? Let us go read the Gospels and see what He did in this kind of situation and then try to be that way." Yes, it is good to read about what Jesus would do, but today

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in resurrection it is not what Jesus would do but what Jesus is doing – what Jesus is doing right now inside of you. He is alive in you.

The cumulative process of the Lord Jesus Christ

Implicit in the statement, "the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit," is the revelation of the cumulative process of the Lord Jesus Christ. In His incarnation He became flesh, and in His resurrection He became a life-giving Spirit. These two "becames" imply that a prior existence and history has taken on new forms. This means the total accumulation of all His divinity and humanity has now come up in resurrection. In resurrection the entire life-process of the Lord Jesus is available as the Spirit to give the cumulative resources of His life to our mind, emotion, and will. Now the entire inner life of Jesus Christ is our portion to participate in because He is the Spirit (2 Cor. 3:17-18). Thus, the life-giving Spirit is not a mere feeling or an influence upon us. It is the cumulative life of the last Adam, as God and as man – the God-man.

John 1:1 says, "In the beginning was the

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Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Then John 1:14 says, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." This means God became a man. And when He became a man, He simply changed His form – from the form of God to the form of a servant and a man. But He did not cease being God. His Person is a cumulative Person. He brought God into man. So now God was on the earth in the form of a man. He did not relinquish His deity when He became a man. He only emptied Himself by taking on the form of a man (Phil. 2:7). He was the God-man. Indeed, He spoke of Himself more in the Gospels as "the Son of Man" than as "the Son of God." This means He was identifying Himself with man.

Yet as man He did not suspend His humanity and do all things by the power of His deity. No. He lived as a man, and as a man He lived totally dependent upon the divine life (John 8:28-29). He took on humanity, and in the presence of the flesh, in the presence of sin, in the presence of temptation, He saturated and permeated His entire human being with the Spirit. He was in "the likeness of the flesh of sin" (Rom. 8:3). This language conveys to us that the Lord Jesus was in

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the very heat of the presence of sin, yet without sin. Being in the likeness of sin, He condemned sin in the flesh. That means every day He condemned sin. He obeyed the Father. He drew from the Father. He cried, "Abba, Father!" He saturated His manhood with the divine life.

Jesus lived 33 1/2 years, yet we do not know anything about many of those years. There is no record. Thirty years are basically silent. All you read about is His family life and work life (Luke 2; Mark 6:3). This is where most of our time is spent – family life and work life. And in the family life/work life context, He was letting the Father penetrate His humanity.

And then we know He went to the cross. He was buried. But Hallelujah, He rose from the dead. He was in the form of God, and then in the form of man. Now in resurrection He took on a different form. As Paul says, the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit. Look at His cumulative Person. He is the God-man with all this history, with 33 1/2 years of human living – victorious over the flesh, over the soul-life, over the world, over the devil, over every temptation. He was tempted as we are, yet without sin. All these experiences were

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accumulated in His being. And then as the last Adam He rose from the dead and became a life-giving Spirit. Now in this form, as the resurrected Christ, as a life-giving Spirit, everything that He was as God and as man is accumulated, including what He passed through as man, as well as the effectiveness of everything that happened on the cross. There He dealt with the law, He dealt with sin, He dealt with the flesh, He dealt with the old creation, and He died to the world. All of this now has been accumulated in His resurrection form.

Returning back to the Father in resurrection as a man

The Lord prayed in John 17:5, "And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was." He was in the form of God. Then He assumed a human nature, brought God into man, and then brought man into God. He took humanity through this process into resurrection and became a life-giving Spirit. He returned to the glory which He had with the Father before the world was, but there was one big difference – He was now a man. Christ

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as the last Adam returned to the Father as a man. He is a God-man. He brought humanity into the Godhead. The form in which He will ever live in resurrection is as Jesus, the God-man.

On resurrection morning He told Mary, "Do not touch Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brothers and say to them, I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God" (John 20:17). These words imply that a hidden ascension was about to take place. Then there was another, open ascension when the disciples saw the Lord ascend (Acts 1:9-11). In the open ascension, He went up physically, visibly, in His resurrected body. But in the hidden ascension, He presented Himself to the Father, as firstfruits, in His glorified humanity.

In the Old Testament we see the type of the firstfruits (Lev. 23:10). A sheaf of the firstfruits of the harvest of the land had to be brought into the house to be offered to God. So the Lord's word to Mary before His hidden ascension, "Do not touch Me," revealed that He as the sheaf of the firstfruits, the Firstborn, was exclusively for the Father's satisfaction. When He came back to the glory which He had before the world was, He could say,

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"Father, look at Me. I was in the form of God, but now look at Me. I have brought humanity into Us." Now humanity is in the Godhead. Not only so, but as the last Adam becoming a life- giving Spirit, now His humanity is being transmitted into our humanity.

He was in the form of God before He became a man. And now He returned back to the Father, with a body in resurrection. He returned as a man with the total history of that manhood. The cumulative history of the God-man was presented to the Father. Everything that He is and everything that He passed through is now glorified and has become the very essence of the Spirit. Now this Spirit is in our spirit. He is that close! Jesus is as close as your spirit and your mouth. Do you have problems? It is critical to know how to make contact with Jesus. When you say "Jesus," the cumulative life of the last Adam becoming a life-giving Spirit is dispensed throughout your entire soul-life. That is why we do not live by our life. We live by His life. As His Body, we live by the life of our Head.

Christ as the life-giving Spirit is the accumulation of God and man. His personal

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history, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, and exaltation is now being transmitted into our spirit. In our mind, we may be in despair. We need resurrection. Just call the name "Jesus." You will get His Person. "Jesus." When we call "Jesus," He gets into our mind and He gets into our emotion and He gets into our will and He transmits Himself. What can we say but Hallelujah! What a Christ! What a rich Christ who is the fullness of the Godhead bodily! Do not go anywhere else. There is no other humanity. Even the best perfected humanity will never make it. There is already a last Adam. That humanity has been finalized and authorized for us to partake of.

His humanity has become a drink

According to John 7:37-39, the humanity of Christ has become a drink. Verse 37 says, "Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink." Thirst means you need something. Thirst manifests itself in your irritability, your anxiety, the force of your flesh, the force of your mind. That is thirst. Your sense of

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emptiness – that is thirst. Jesus said, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink."

Then He added in verses 38-39, 38 "He who believes into Me, as the Scripture said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water. 39 But this He said concerning the Spirit, whom those who believed into Him were about to receive; for the Spirit was not yet, because Jesus had not yet been glorified." This means the Spirit, as the accumulation of His life and history, was not yet. In that sense, it was not yet. The Spirit of God was already there. Genesis 1:2 says, "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." But why does verse 39 say, "the Spirit was not yet"? It does not mean that the Spirit of God was nonexistent. But it means that the Spirit with the accumulation of Christ's Person and history – all that He passed through as man – was not yet until Jesus was glorified. Then when He was glorified, the Spirit was for the first time spoken of as the Spirit of Jesus (Acts 16:9). It is the Spirit of Christ (Rom. 8:9). It is the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, the accumulation of all that He is and all that He has passed through (Phil. 1:19). Now look at this marvelous Spirit. This is the Spirit that Jesus

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is speaking of in John 7. And now, as the Spirit, Jesus has become water to drink – "Come to Me and drink, and out of your innermost being will flow rivers of living water."

We have to see that the Spirit is the form of the resurrected Christ. Christ is alive as the Spirit. Any talk of the Holy Spirit without the centrality of Christ will end up in error. The Spirit is Christ-centered, as John 16:14-15 reveals: "He [the Spirit] takes out of Mine [Christ's] and will show it to you." This is why the Spirit is not merely an influence or some kind of physical sensation. Although we may experience various manifestations of the Spirit, the content, the centrality, of the Spirit is Christ Himself. Oh, what a form this resurrected Christ is in! If we see this vision, it will control us. The way you tap into this resurrected Christ is just by opening your mouth to drink Him by calling His name, "Jesus." If you call on the name of George Washington, it is not going to work, because George Washington cannot transmit himself into you. You can only thank God for George Washington. But just call "Jesus" once, and in that name there is a whole life being transmitted into us.

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Oh, brothers and sisters, the church is an event. It happens when we are connected to this Christ. Then we stand up. We testify. We sing. We are beside ourselves. This is the way the church was on the day of Pentecost. They were filled. They were touched and infused with this resurrected Person. They were joined to Christ. As the Spirit, He took on the form of the church. They were all praising God and speaking in tongues, and everyone was looking on and saying, "What is this? What does this mean?" So Peter had to calm the situation and say, "This is that." Then he spoke of the process of the resurrected Christ and many more were joined to the Lord. How glorious! This is the form of the resurrected Christ. He is the Spirit today. Look at Him as the Spirit. Worship Him. Admire the accumulation of the divine life in His humanity as the last Adam. All of this became a life-giving Spirit.

The form of Christ in resurrection as Head

There are two major matters related to the form of Christ in resurrection: first, He is the Spirit; and second, He is the Head. These matters

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are interrelated. That is, the way He is the Spirit is as the Head, and the way He is the Head is as the Spirit. As the life-giving Spirit, He is not only the Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36), but He is the Head of His Body, the church (Eph. 1:22-23). So the form of Christ is now different from the form He had when He was walking on the earth. Paul reflects this in 2 Corinthians 5:16 when he says, "So then we, from now on, know no one according to the flesh; even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him so no longer." This statement may have puzzled us for years. But it is one of the most meaningful statements in the entire New Testament concerning the form of Christ revealed to Paul on the Damascus road. From that point, he no longer knew Christ after the flesh. Now he knew Him in His resurrection form. And what is that form? That form is as the Head of His Body, the church. So the church is just Christ enlarged, expressed, filling every member, gifting all the members. The church expresses the multifaceted grace that is available from the Head to supply every kind of member, to take care of every kind of need. Christ is now expressed in the church. This is marvelous! The

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church is just the form of this resurrected Christ.

— *Bill Freeman*