

# (Radical Jesus) 14 Radical Surrender

by Glenn Meldrum

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of surrender to God, highlighting the consequences of rebellion and the barriers that prevent us from fully surrendering to Jesus.*

**Duration:** 21:51

**Scripture:** 2 Corinthians 7:10, Galatians 5:22

**Topics:** "Surrender"

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## Description

In this sermon, Glenn Meldrum discusses the concept of surrendering to God and the consequences of not doing so. He explains that worldly sorrow, where people acknowledge their sins but continue to cling to them, prevents true repentance and deliverance. Meldrum emphasizes the importance of hating one's sin and seeking freedom from it in order to experience God's grace. He also highlights the idea that everyone is a slave to something or someone, either to God leading to righteousness or to sin leading to death. Meldrum concludes by stating that surrendering to God is essential for a fulfilled life and warns of the resistance from the world and hell when people start to understand their need for surrender.

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## Transcript

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We are now entering our 14th week in our study on the Radical Jesus. Today's podcast will begin a new section called, Radical Surrender. Throughout this study, I have strove to establish that Jesus is the standard of what it means to be human, and more specifically, Christian.

This should not be hard to understand if we are willing to believe and obey the Bible as the Word of God. Even the name Christian implies that true followers of Jesus should live and act like Jesus. In other words, to be Christian, they must be Christ-like.

In Acts 11.26, we are told that the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch. Prior to this, the followers of Jesus were derogatorily called Nazarenes or Galileans by their enemies. The label that Christ's disciples were given in Antioch was in keeping with the practice of that time, where followers of a given religion or philosophical teacher was given the name of that teacher.

Christians are to be followers of Jesus and hold to all his teachings, so they live and act like their master. The negative is implied in this thought, which goes something like this. If the character of people do not resemble that of Jesus, then they are not true followers of Jesus, and therefore they are not authentic Christians.

As we look at the subject of surrender, we must continue to look at Jesus and learn how he surrendered to the Father. This is the key to Christ-likeness, to look at Jesus, to study Jesus, and then to strive to be like Jesus. By looking at how Jesus perfectly surrendered to the Father, we will learn how we are to surrender to Christ.

As we will see in this section of our study on the radical Jesus, that he himself is our faultless example of the surrendered life. Jesus was wholly submitted to the Father, and that submission was proved by the life he lived and what he accomplished. Surrender is far more than mere words that are spoken or sung.

This is extremely important. There is always proof when people strive to live the surrendered life, and there is proof when they do not. It is not just that Jesus had a perfect character.

He had the anointing that rested upon him and the fruit that came out of his earthly life and ministry. Both the anointing and fruit of ministry come out of the condition of a person's character. If we are truly like Jesus, then we will begin to bear the fruit of the Spirit and the fruit that comes out of anointed ministry.

If we do not bear such fruit, then something is terribly wrong with our faith and life. The greatness of a man's power, declared William Booth, is the measure of his surrender, not the size of one's ministry or any of the other erroneous secular standards that we use today to determine success in the Church. One of the hardest things we will ever face in our journey through the Christian life is learning how to surrender to God.

Why? Because we are rebels by nature and by choice. Yet our temporal and eternal salvation directly depends upon the choice of our free will. If we surrender to Christ, we will know the wonder of real fellowship with him and experience the power of his resurrection both in this life and the one to come.

If we rebel against him, we will not know the joys of sweet fellowship with him, nor will we taste his resurrection power. So the subject of surrender is extremely important. Salvation is a gift of God that comes by faith through grace.

The Lord does not force people to go to heaven or hell. He has given us a genuine free will. In the end, he honors the choice that each and every person makes.

Those that truly want to go to heaven will make heaven their home because God is more than able to save people. Those that end up in hell are people that refuse God's gift of salvation and the grace he freely offered them. Warren Worsby wrote, And the act of turning is the power of grace in action.

What I am stating here has nothing to do with salvation by works, as some might say, but the means by which people receive or respond to divine grace. Rebellion against God is the principal reason why people will spend an eternity in hell. They made the decision and God honored it at their judgment.

I would say that the greatest expression of rebellion is that which goes against the greatest commandment, which is to love the Lord with all of our being. Martin Luther said it this way, The greatest commandment is to love the Lord with all of our heart, mind, soul, and strength, and the greatest sin is not

to love him with all of your heart, mind, soul, and strength. Luther is presenting here some plain and simple logic.

To refuse to love Jesus with all of our being and faculty is a deliberate act of rebellion. It is a choice of the will. We can see then that to authentically love Jesus, we must begin to live a life of surrender to him.

Though Christ commands us to surrender to him, he will not force that surrender. It is an interesting thing about surrender that if it is forced, then it is not surrender. People can suffer the horrors of concentration camps.

They can be tortured and experience extreme abuse. Or they may be forced to do hard labor while never surrendering their will to their oppressors. Though the outward actions of people may conform to what is forced upon them, that does not mean that they have inwardly surrendered their will.

The will is a hard thing to break. And when we say no to God, even he will not force the will of man to conform to his will. Let me quote a precious old saint named Fenelon.

God has endowed mankind with free will in order that mankind may have something real to offer him. We have nothing to call our own save our will. Nothing else is ours.

Sickness takes away health and life. Riches melt away. Mental powers depend upon a man's bodily strength.

The one and only thing really ours is our will. And consequently, it is of this that God is jealous. For he gave it, not that we should use it as our own, but that we might restore it to him wholly and undividedly.

Whoever holds back any particle of reluctance or desire as his right defrauds his maker to whom all is due. With my next thought, I am not trying to overgeneralize the magnitude of surrender. But I would venture to say that all of the suffering we go through has in one way or another been the result of rebellion and disobedience against God, whether of our own doing or that of others.

When we look at the blessings that come from God, we can see that they are the result of surrendering to the will and purposes of God. When we rebel against God's will, we are certain to suffer for it. There are multiple ways that we can suffer from our rebellion, such as God letting us reap what we sow, or that we find ourselves directly fighting against God.

When suffering comes our way, how we respond to it determines what will come out of it. When we submit to God through our suffering, he will turn our suffering into blessings and give us a harvest of good and lasting fruit as a result. To resist and rebel against God when we suffer will only cause us greater suffering and exasperate the situation.

It is one thing to be an enemy of people, another to be an enemy of hell. But to be an enemy of God is sure to bring absolute ruin. If men and devils fight against us, there is hope in God.

But to be an enemy of God, there is no hope of rescue or help from any place. Our rebelliousness causes us all kinds of sorrow. The famous missionary Hudson Taylor wrote on the reason why professing Christians can live such unsatisfied lives.

He said that the real secret of an unsatisfied life lies too often in an unsundered will. That is a very true statement. We are rebels, and that rebellion is deeply rooted in our fallen character.

Everything inside of us speaks, even screams that we should seek to preserve the control of our lives. The rebel self refuses to yield control to another, especially to God. Not just that, the world goes helter-skelter whenever people start to understand their desperate need to surrender to Christ.

The kingdom of this world will not release one of its own without a fight. Then we have hell as an active advocate of rebellion. Hell raises an alarm when signs of surrender begin to show in a life, or when the Holy Spirit is powerfully working to bring people to salvation.

So it is not just our rebellious nature that gives us such trouble, but the rebellious self in cahoots with the world and the hordes of hell. Together they aggressively labor to keep us from learning the power of the surrendered life. Because of our natural propensity towards rebellion and our love of self-rule, the very idea of total surrender to God can be terrifying to us.

With this in mind, we need to learn a deeper truth about surrender. The fact is that everyone surrenders to something or to someone. The rebellion I am speaking of has to do with mankind's rebellion against God.

That does not mean mankind does not surrender. God created us to surrender, to be subordinate to Him. In the beginning, that surrender was rightly directed towards God.

But after Adam's rebellion, surrender to God was replaced with mutiny, defiance, and revolution. Through that rebellion, mankind did not obtain freedom, but bondage. Bondage to forces that only have the ability to oppress, abuse, torment, and kill.

All that really happened was that mankind's loyalty was changed from that towards a good, benevolent God, to self-idolatry filled with man-made gods and ideologies, all of which are driven by the cruel taskmasters of hell. Paul told us in Romans 6.16, Here we are told the truth about surrender. We all are slaves.

Slaves either to God that leads to righteousness in life, or slaves to sin in hell that leads to eternal separation from God and suffering in hell. Everyone surrenders to something or someone. And when people think that they are self-made individuals, then they are only deceiving themselves.

The important question is, who are you surrendering to? Whose slave are you? Gods or the devils? Now we come to the issue of the heart and how it affects the will. What we love supremely is what we fully surrender to. People may give their lives or wealth for a cause or to a person, but we tenaciously hold on to our heart, refusing to give it all away.

And even when people say they give their whole heart to another, the fact is that they always keep back a portion so they do not lose control of their lives. Why do we do this? Because there is one thing in our fallen condition that we are prone to love more than anything else in the world, and that is self. A man and woman may swear solemn wedding vows to each other while retaining deep down inside certain stipulations, conditions, and exit clauses just in case things do not go as planned.

We do this because we love ourselves more than anything. So we must have a means to protect ourselves if things do not come to pass as we intended. This problem of inordinate self-love causes us to be rebellious against God, who demands the entirety of our heart and will.

One of the names by which God revealed himself in the Old Testament is Jealous. This name is found in Exodus 34, verse 14. For thou shalt worship no other God, for the Lord whose name is Jealous is a

jealous God.

God does love us, and his love is so great, so holy, so pure, that he will not share us with another lover, even when that lover is the idol called self. We are created to love the Lord with our entire being, to be fully surrendered to him alone, and from that relationship all other relationships were to be defined. We came to know the wonderful yet terrible name of the Lord as Jealous because we rebelled against his command that we were to love him supremely.

We belong to him due to his divine right as creator and redeemer, but we have played the whore. Whenever people live the life of a spiritual prostitute, then they must pay the consequences for that rebellion against God. We need to come to grips with the fact that our spiritual prostitution has done us great violence, and this violence is self-inflicted.

But even if people claim that they have given the lion's share of their heart to another, they still refuse to fully give up their will. The will and the heart are irrevocably interwoven. The more we love a person, the deeper the surrender becomes.

The problem we face has to do with our self-love, which causes us to have a determined desire to rule our own lives. We want to be the Lord of our destiny, therefore we stubbornly resist the surrender of our will to another, especially to God. We do not want to be conquered by anyone, so we hold back our heart to protect ourselves.

We think self-rule is better than surrendering to God, even when our self-rule is destroying us. My, how foolish we can be! There are many reasons why we refuse to fully surrender to God, and I am not going to take the time to go through a long list of them. People that are honest with God and with themselves will seek to understand what keeps them from deeper surrender to Jesus.

Those that are not honest with themselves and with God will make a long list of excuses why they cannot be and do what God desires them to be and do. In the end, this has to do with love for God or the lack of love for Him. One principal reason why people fail to surrender to the Lord centers upon the fact that surrender is contrary to our natural ingrained instinct of self-preservation.

Our instinct of self-preservation is a gift from God that has its rightful place in this fallen world. It caused us to strive to live and overcome in the face of great obstacles and difficulties. But if this God-given gift does not surrender to the Lord, it will cause us to fight against Him.

This is why Jesus warned us in Luke 9, verse 24, for whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it. Notice that the only way we can save our life is by giving it away to Jesus, not by trying to retain control over it. If we do not conquer our natural inclination to self-rule and self-preservation, then we will not lose our life to Jesus, which means we rebel against His will as defined by His Word.

Only by losing our life to Jesus can we gain the real and eternal life that only comes through Jesus. The failure to lose our life in Christ will result in the literal loss of our life forever in hell. Another major reason why we do not totally surrender ourselves to Christ is because of pride.

I addressed the subject of pride when I recently taught on the radical nature of humility. Pride is really a type of fear of man that causes us to be afraid of what people think about us. It will cause us to live in such a way so that people do not think we are weak or have any need of help.

Many people will end up in hell because they refuse to come to the grips of the reality of their frailty, weakness, and neediness. Until we come to the place that we begin to see our frailty, weakness, and neediness, we will never surrender to Jesus, or we will only give Him a portion of our heart and will. It is extremely important that we understand that partial surrender is really rebellion against God.

Why? Because God demands all of our heart and will, not a portion of it. Many self-professing Christians will never walk in the victory that Christ purchased for them because they are too proud to see their neediness, too proud to see their frailty. Marriages fall apart because pride keeps the husband and wife from taking the path of repentance and surrender.

Pride is a very, very ugly thing that brings only pain and suffering in the end. No good ever comes out of pride. Fear is another destructive influence that causes people not to fully surrender to Jesus.

Fear has many faces. It can be fear of pain or of suffering, fear of rejection. Our fears can give way to phobias, which are persistent, irrational fears of a specific object, activity, or situation that leads to a compelling desire to avoid it.

Scripture has a tremendous amount to say about fear, and if we are walking with the Lord, we should not be afraid because He is dwelling inside of us throughout our journey on earth. For true believers, there is nothing we can go through that God Himself is not right there with us. He dwells within.

Surrender is very important to overcoming fear because we have to place our trust and confidence in God. We cannot walk by what we see but by faith. We have to believe that God is bigger than our problems and needs.

When we fear, we are refusing to trust and surrender to God. Instead, we are surrendering to real or fictitious fears and problems. Fear always produces torment because it has to do with self-love and self-preservation, which is detrimental to a life of faith and peace with God.

Some other influences that keep people from fully surrendering to Jesus are feelings of hurt, abuse, and rejection. Just like with fear, these emotions and beliefs compel people to protect themselves from further pain and hurt. Yet in our irrational belief to protect ourselves, we can actually protect ourselves from what we need most, which is Jesus.

I hate to say this, but life is filled with pain, hurt, and rejection. It's going to happen whether you like it or not or whether you try to protect yourself from it. We will either seek to insulate ourselves from such things, which will only alienate ourselves from God and people, or we will cling to Jesus so we can overcome the hurt, pain, and rejection that life can dish out.

This desire to protect ourselves is just another expression of self-love and self-preservation. Probably the strongest motivating force for our persistent drive to be our own boss is self-love. Why do we think advertisers are always trying to sell us their wares or services by stating that you deserve the best or that you deserve to be happy and so on? They use that ploy because they know most people believe that they deserve to be happy.

What are the advertisers using to motivate us to buy their goods and services? Which is our inordinate love of self. If the love of self was not the strong, passionate drive that it is, then advertisers, politicians, and a host of others would not effectively be manipulating people so they can sell their wares and try to accomplish their agendas. It is the love of self that is at the core of all idolatry, all sexual perversion, all

greed and all hatred, and every other form of evil propagated by humanity.

It is as if we have bouts with insanity. We want to rule our lives even when we are self-destructing. In the closing minutes of today's podcast, I want to begin to look at the remedy to our natural desire for self-rule and rebellion against God.

The remedy first begins by seeing the illness. Until we see the deep-seated rebellion that defines our fallen nature, we will never ask God for the remedy. However, there is something more needed than just seeing the spiritual malady that plagues us.

We have to want to be cured from it. People can be sorry that they have sinned and sorry that they have hurt people, but not sorry enough to change. Just look at the drunk or the drug addict and you can see that there.

The scriptures call this worldly sorrow. This is where people have a right knowledge of their crimes against God and people, but their love of sin and self is so powerful that they will continue to cling to their sin no matter the cost. When people love their sin, they will not repent of it, even when they know that they are doing wrong and know they will suffer for it.

People have to come to the place where they begin to hate the sin that they have practiced, or they will not seek deliverance from it. It is at this point when people see the facts about their sin and genuinely want freedom from it where we will find God's amazing grace working in our lives to rescue us from ourselves. Only then will we begin to see the surrendered life as a beautiful, liberating gift from God.

Next week we will begin studying how Jesus is the perfect example of the surrendered life. I would like to close with a powerful statement from Dawson Trotman. God can do more through one man who is 100% dedicated to Him than through 100 men 90% dedicated to Him.

God does not need us, but He does offer us the privilege of knowing the joy that is found when His life fills ours, which can only happen when we live the surrendered life.

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