

(Radical Jesus) 15 Radical Surrender

by Glenn Meldrum

The sermon emphasizes the importance of absolute surrender to God, which is exemplified by Jesus' life and teachings, and encourages listeners to strive for a deeper level of surrender and love for God.

Duration: 24:13

Scripture: Psalm 69:9, Matthew 6:33, John 2:17, John 8:28-29, John 12:50

Topics: "Surrender"

Description

The video titled 'God Commands Christians to Forgive' produced by IHP Video Productions emphasizes the importance of forgiveness in the Christian faith. It highlights the radical nature of surrender and the absolute surrender that Jesus demonstrated to his Heavenly Father. The video encourages viewers to comprehend Christ's surrender and recognize that it was extremely radical. It also introduces the new ministry endeavor of IHP Video Productions, which aims to communicate the radical nature of the Biblical faith through video.

Transcript

This message by Glenn Meldrum was originally produced by In His Presence Ministries for the Radical Truth Podcast. You can listen and subscribe to the Radical Truth Podcast by going to www.ihpministry.com. You are welcome to reproduce this message for free distribution. This message is part of a series entitled, The Radical Jesus.

Before we get into today's lesson, I want to inform you that we have a new ministry endeavor at In His Presence Ministries. We started a little while ago, IHP Video Productions, which is an effort to communicate the radical nature of the biblical faith through video. Our first production was called The Radical Jesus, which was produced through Eternal Weight of Glory.

Kathy Gallagher was the executive producer of that powerful five-minute video. You can watch The Radical Jesus by going to our website at www.ihpministry.com, or search for it on YouTube or GodTube. IHP Video Productions has produced a new video titled, God Commands Christians to Forgive.

This title gives you a good idea of the content. David Fraser is the executive producer of this short video, and he is working on some other productions that should be released in the near future. So take a little time out of your busy day and watch this new video titled, God Wants Christians to Forgive.

Like I said, you can find it on the IHP Ministry website, or you can go to YouTube or GodTube. In last week's podcast, we began a new section in our study on The Radical Jesus by turning our attention to the radical nature of surrender. Today, we will go a little deeper into this very important subject by looking at the radical surrender Jesus lived to his Heavenly Father.

If we really try to comprehend Christ's surrender to the Father, then we are sure to come to the conclusion that his surrender was extremely radical, because it was absolute. Any honest effort to understand absolute surrender is sure to create in us some very disconcerting emotions. Let's just be really honest with ourselves here.

We have a terrible time understanding absolute surrender to God, because Jesus is the only person that has ever lived it out. And since we haven't had the privilege of walking with Jesus as those first disciples did, we will not have a human example living among us that we can imitate. We may have known some wonderful saints that as far as saints go, they are living wholly surrendered lives, but we have never known anyone that was absolutely perfect or even came close.

Since we are all tainted with Adam's fallen nature of rebellion, we can never, while in this life, be sinless. We can be forgiven, and in that sense we can be without stain, but that sinful nature resides in the bosom of every human being, even the best of Christians. We are all sinners that are in desperate need of a Savior.

Jesus was the only person this world has ever known that did not need a Savior because he was without sin. He also did not need a Savior because he was the Savior. Even when we look at Jesus, we have a difficult time trying to understand how God could become human.

Out of all the billions of people that have been born or will be born, there will only be one perfect person. That fact cannot change. This means that when we try to grasp what a perfect person acted like through all of life's challenging situations, we find that we do not have a point of reference to relate to.

Jesus stands alone and unique among all of humanity. In this fallen world, rebellion is normal. It is what we are raised in and what we live out because it is what we are on the inside.

So how are we to live out absolute surrender to God when we have never seen it lived out in a single person that we have known? We have laws that strive to restrain the wilder, messier, extreme forms of rebellion. But so long as rebellion does not break the law of the land or harm people or property, then most people are not bothered by it. How often is it that we laugh at funny expressions of rebellion that we see in our children or in family and friends? Funny expressions of rebellion in a little child may cause parents to laugh now, but when that child reaches his or her teen years, they are not laughing anymore.

Families develop their own rules and ways of dealing with rebellion, most of which is really only trying to manage it so that it's not out of control. In the world in which we live, it is a given that rebellion is here to stay. It has come to be what is expected of people, whether young or old.

We always say, well, he has to sow his wild oats, but why does he? Because he is a sinner and in desperate need of a savior. Not just that, there are forms of rebellion that we even glamorize by making them to appear fashionable, sophisticated, and hip. Look at what is popular today.

It is not what is pure and innocent, but it is the bad boy, bad girl look. We glorify evil, we glorify rebellion, and we think that is what is cool. When Jesus came into the world, he revealed that the human race is not

normal, but a twisted mess of rebellion and sin.

Our fallen nature is so contrary to Christ that we cannot comprehend what absolute surrender looks like, much less fathom how to obtain it. Ever since the early days of Jesus, there have been relentless efforts to somehow alter who he is, to slander his character or vilify his actions. Why are people so prone to do this? Why are they driven to promote and believe lies like the one that claims Jesus had sexual relationship with Mary Magdalene? Because if people can make Jesus sinful and rebellious like they are, then they are off the hook.

They do not have to live out Christ's teaching. Then morals are irrelevant because the plumb line has been destroyed. Since we have such a terrible time grasping the full extent of Christ's surrender, we have a terrible time trying to live it out.

Even as Christians, rebellion has come to define our character to such an extent that we have come to think of partial surrender as normal, and at times even praiseworthy. How many truly on-fire, spirit-filled churches are there in this country? Be honest now, not very many. Do you, dear listener, attend an on-fire church? If not, why not? The absence of genuinely on-fire churches has come about because lukewarmness has become the acceptable temperature for the American church.

This is the comfortable temperature for the comfortable Christian. The lukewarm church is the epitome of the unsundered life. Lukewarm Christianity is what defines the majority of churches in America, which means that it defines the majority of self-professing Christians.

Remember the parable I gave of the deformed man that lived among the village people? The village people thought that the deformed man was deformed when in fact he was perfect. It was the village people that were deformed, and because they had been deformed for generations beyond counting, they thought they were normal. It was the deformed man that was normal.

Who was in my parable an allegory of Jesus? Jesus was the only perfect man that has ever walked this planet, and he was hated for his perfections because they exposed just how twisted and perverted we actually are. More times than we care to admit, we act like the foolish village people who thought their deformities were normal. If you want to get a glimpse of a perfect person, then you must fix your eyes on Jesus.

You must diligently study the Jesus of Scripture, not the pop concept. Then you must pay very close attention to what he taught, and then plead with him for the grace to live it out. To see Jesus and his glorious perfections and unspoiled obedience will reprove us of our spiritual, emotional, and intellectual deformities and rebellion.

I'm not saying that such knowledge will not be painful to us, but if we refuse to look at Jesus, then we are destined to live a very unbiblical pop version of Christianity that is really another religion than the one Jesus gave us. And if we do not make Jesus the focus of our faith, then what is really defining our faith? Opinions? False teaching? Lies and illusions? This is too important an issue for us to ignore. We are in desperate need of an invasion of truth into our lives.

When the truth of who Jesus is, and of who we are breaks into our personal world, then we will respond in one of three ways. First, we can pretend that we are normal, good people, and then live the life of a hypocrite. Second, we can only rebel against Jesus and refuse to bow our knee to his rule over our lives.

And third, we can acknowledge that Jesus is right, repent of our sin and rebellion, and then surrender our all to him. Because we claim to be Christian doesn't mean that we are exempt from believing lies. We can easily deceive ourselves into thinking that we have surrendered everything to Christ, when in fact we have not.

It is all too common an event for a pastor to ask his congregation to raise their hands if they love Jesus. All of a sudden, hands pop up all over the place with shouts of affirmation. Now imagine if that pastor had a surprise in store for his congregation that morning.

The pastor says, okay, let's see if this is true. If you really do love Jesus with all of your heart, I have videos of all of you that attend this church, and I would like to play portions of those videos to the congregation so they can learn who really loves Jesus and who does not. You think that pastor would get a standing ovation for such a suggestion? No, he would get the boot right out the front door of the church.

Or they might send him to some remote jungle for mission work and hope that he does not realize that is a one-way ticket until he gets off the plane. People would get very scared and very angry if videos of our private lives were available for all to see. What is the primary reason we have such a difficult time living a Christ-like life? It all whittles down to this, our irrational desire to retain control over our lives, to be our own boss, and to decide our own destiny.

We often stubbornly fight against God to preserve our self-rule because we think we know what is best for our lives, even though we do not know what our tomorrows will bring. We often forget that the Lord created us to live totally surrendered to Him, and it is only when we passionately pursue the surrendered life that we will begin to taste the heavenly joy that goes with it. We were not created for sin and rebellion.

We were not created for war, murder, or sexual perversion. We were not created to have our minds and emotions altered through drugs or alcohol. God created us for something infinitely better.

He created us to be enough like Him so that we could know the depths and heights and riches of His love. This is overwhelming to me, that God Almighty wants us to have real vibrant fellowship with Him, and He died on the cross so we could be forgiven and rose from the grave so we could be with Him forever. Grab hold of that thought, and it will stretch your brain and cause you to press in to know Him better.

The only way we will ever have an accurate conception of true surrender is to know Christ, to study Christ, to emulate Christ. If we continue our rebellion in a lukewarm religion, we will never know the joy that comes through striving to surrender our all to Jesus. Stand outside of the true faith and look at those saints that are striving to live surrendered to Jesus, and they will look like weirdos, extremists, and fanatics.

But get your eyes on Jesus. Throw yourselves at His feet and seek Him with all of your might so that you may know the wonder of sweet surrender and you will begin to see the truth. One day Jesus declared in John 8, 55, though you do not know Him, I know Him.

If I said I did not, I would be a liar like you, but I do know Him and keep His word. Here is truth in flesh and blood confronting religious people that were immersed in lies. What was the lie these religious people were believing? That they knew God and were in right fellowship with Him.

Their lies proved they did not know God. It was just a few verses prior to the one I just read where Jesus boldly declared, you belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was

a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him.

When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. The Pharisees had an outward form of religion, but was void of the inward life that comes out of a surrendered life and a genuine relationship with the living God. These men were rebels against God.

They did not know what it meant to live surrendered to Him. But tragically, they thought they were right with God solely because they had religious feelings and beliefs. Jesus told the truth when He declared that He knew the father perfectly.

What proof did Jesus give in His defense? That He lived in perfect obedience to the father. Jesus found this life of absolute surrender, of tremendous joy. It was the passion of His heart to live fully surrendered to the father.

If we do not find the life of surrender to God of tremendous joy, then the fact is that we are not striving to live the surrendered life with all of our heart. Christ's surrender to the father was the only logical response to knowing the father as He did. Jesus knew the father, and that knowledge produced the only right response, which is total obedience and absolute surrender.

If we really knew Jesus, then we would be living out lives of deeper surrender than we have yet done. People that do not live surrendered to Jesus do so because they do not know Him. And if they claim to be Christian, but prove by their lives that they do not know Christ, then they are only perpetuating the same sins that the Pharisees committed so long ago.

Since Jesus truly knew the father, He understood that the father's will was infinitely good and perfect. For those that are learning to love Jesus more and more, they understand that the greater the knowledge they have of God, the greater will be their love for Him. There are two primary reasons why people resist surrendering their lives to Jesus.

The first is that they do not know Jesus enough to grasp the truth that His will for them is infinitely good and perfect. Second, since they love their sins so much, not even a clear knowledge of the nature of God would entice them to leave their life of sin. But for those who want to know Christ, they will find that surrender becomes easier the more they know Him.

There are times when to obey Christ is very difficult. It is just that the more we know Him, the quicker we are to surrender our will to Him because we know that He is good and that He is for us. Love is an integral part of surrender.

We surrender to those things or people we love and will not surrender to those that we hate or dislike. When people authentically love Jesus, they will strive to live surrendered to Him. Those that do not love God will not surrender their lives to Him.

People that claim to love God but do not live a genuine Christian life prove by their rebellion that they really do not love God. Their life is proved by their actions. What is on the inside is proved by what comes out of them.

Jesus told us in Matthew 7, 16, by their fruit you will recognize them. This verse is part of a warning that Jesus gives about false prophets and teachers. But the principle works in other situations as well.

Peter is telling us that the fruit or character and actions of a person's life will reveal their true spiritual condition. Jesus went on to say, likewise, every good tree bears good fruit and a bad tree bears bad fruit. People may deceive others for a time, but eventually what we truly are on the inside will come out.

Eventually, the spiritual fruit of a person will be seen. This stands true with surrender as well. You can tell people are endeavoring to live surrendered lives by the life they live and by the fruit they bear.

You can also tell when people are not trying to live the surrendered life to Jesus by the fruit they bear. If we love God, we will live like it. And if we do not love God, then we will live like it as well.

Jesus surrendered to the father was absolute because he loved the father absolutely. No one has ever loved the heavenly father more than Jesus. And no one knew the father better than Jesus.

His perfect knowledge of the father caused him to love the father with everything he had. Look at the lives of those saints that deeply love the Lord and you will not find among them a rebellious person. Why? Because they love God and so found the surrendered life one of joy.

Even when living such a life cost them their possessions or very lives. I want to ask a very disturbing question here. If you do not love Jesus enough to live surrendered to him now, then why do you want to go to heaven? It does not make sense that people would want to spend eternity with the God that they refuse to love or surrender to here on earth.

If they hated him in this life, they will certainly hate him in the next. If they did not want to be with Jesus while they walk this terrestrial globe, then they will not want to be with him throughout eternity in the glories of heaven. Heaven is all about perfectly loving God for eternity.

Never to sin or rebel against him again. Heaven is all about absolute surrender to the one and only God. So do you really want to go to heaven? Don't be settlemental here.

If you do, then it is time to begin to love the Lord with all of your being. And now is a time to learn how to live the surrendered life. When you die, it is too late to begin to love God and too late to know how to surrender to him.

It is in this world that you are given the opportunity that you might know Christ. Your life in this world will fix your life forever in the next. When you look at the Godhead, which is a trinity, we see that scripture clearly reveals that there is one God that has revealed himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

There are tremendous amount of profound mysteries that we will never solve about God. So I'm not going to try and tackle them as if I knew more than what was able to be known for mere mortals. One thing that we can say is that the love and unity within the Godhead was and is as infinite as God himself is.

Now here's a challenging thought. There was not any relational change in the Godhead when the Son became human. The love within the Godhead was unchanged when the eternal Son became man.

Jesus loved the Father perfectly because he knew the Father perfectly. If we strove to know and love the Savior more, then our surrender to him would be far deeper than we have yet attained. The Son's loving surrender to the Father meant total conformity to the Father's will.

Now this is when surrender gets very scary for us humans. We somehow think that if we give everything to Jesus, that we will lose something in the process. But this is just not true.

Jesus lost nothing by his total surrender to the Father. Jesus made many radical statements concerning this aspect of his surrender. Take John 8 28 as an example.

I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me. Here you see Christ's total surrender to the Father through every leg of the human life that Jesus traveled. Jesus was the perfect student of the Father because he spoke only what the Father taught him.

Now add to this verse John 12 50, where Jesus said, whatever I say is just what the Father told me to say. Jesus spoke only what the Father told him to say. That is absolute surrender.

And I have never met a person yet that lived exactly like Jesus did. Everything Jesus said and did was the result of absolute oneness with the Father. Throughout his entire sojourn on earth, there was not a single act of self-will or rebellion.

Everything came through the Father's will, and such obedience and conformity to another's will is frightening to us mortals. We are told in the second chapter of John verse 17, that zeal for his Father's house consumed Jesus. This is a prophecy about Messiah that comes out in Psalm 69 9. Because the son knew and loved his father perfectly, it was his passion to please the Father in everything.

There was never even the slightest expression of half-hearted devotion in Jesus. Everything he did, he did out of love for the Father, and it was done with blazing passion. Where in the world did we ever get the idea that half-hearted devotion was acceptable to God? Jesus never lived such a life.

The life he lived before the disciples was meant to be the model they were to emulate, and Jesus lived it with zeal for his Father. How can we do less? It is what is expected of us, what is commanded of us. To do anything less is rebellion.

Jesus clearly presented to us the motive behind his devotion to the Father, which is found in John chapter 8 verse 29. The one who sent me is with me, he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him. This is a radical statement.

It was a passion of Jesus to please the Father in absolutely everything. What would happen to our faith if we had that same desire and drive? I guarantee you then we'd turn this world upside down. The lukewarm, docile version of Christianity that defines most of the American church today reveals that we are not driven with a passion to please Jesus with all of our being.

Before time began, there was perfect unity between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. When the eternal Son was clothed in flesh and blood, that same unity continued. Nothing broke that unity except one thing, the cross.

When Jesus became the Lamb of God and took upon himself the sins of the world, the Father rejected the Son, and he did not reject the Son as the Son himself, but he rejected the Son because he became sin for us. Jesus was perfect and sinless. It was our sin that caused the separation between Father and Son.

Yet that separation was the unified will of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Think of the horrors of the cross. Think of the agonies the Father and Son experienced when the Son was rejected because of our sin.

Even in this, it was the delight of the Son to do the Father's will. We see Jesus in the garden agonizing over what he was soon to experience. Yet we see perfect surrender when the Son declared, not my will, but thine be done.

Christ's absolute surrender was not contingent upon an easy life or obtaining certain blessings, but upon his all-consuming desire to please the Father he perfectly loved. Paul declared what our motivation should be in 2 Corinthians 5.9. So we make it our goal to please him whether we are at home in the body or away from it. Everything we do should be done with this thought in mind, that we make it our goal to please him.

So ask yourself a couple questions here. How would such an attitude change the entertainment that you have? How about your vacations or even your investments or purchases or relationships? Think of this, for this is very important. The Son's loving surrender meant total conformity to the Father's will, and if we really love Jesus, then our surrender would mean total conformity to Christ's will, or at least the passionate pursuit of it.

Let's look at a few more radical statements Jesus made concerning his total surrender to the Father. In John 8.28, Jesus said, I do nothing on my own but speak what the Father has taught me. Then in John 12.50, he stated, Whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say.

It becomes plain that everything Jesus said and did was a result of absolute oneness with the Father. You cannot find anywhere in the Gospels of one single act of self-will in Christ. Is this not the life we are commanded to imitate? Should we not be striving to live like Jesus? Isn't this what it means to be Christian? But such obedience and conformity to another's will is frightening to us.

Think of this for a moment. Because Jesus knew and loved the Father perfectly, it was his passion to please the Father in everything. Why should such surrender frighten us? Let me summarize some of what I have taught today.

Before time began, there was perfect harmony between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. When the eternal Son was clothed in flesh and blood, that same unity continued. While Jesus walked this planet, he possessed the same zeal he had before time began to please his Father in everything.

It was and still is the delight of the Son to do the Father's will. Christ's absolute surrender was not contingent upon an easy life or obtaining certain blessings, but upon his all-consuming desire to please the Father he loved. This heart should define us.

It should be a powerful motivation for us to live fully surrendered to Jesus. Let me say one more thing before I close. It should be the goal of anyone that calls themselves a follower of Jesus to please him in everything, so that when we stand before him we are not ashamed, but we will hear those wonderful words, well done, good and faithful servant, and turn to the joy of your Lord.

This is what we should be living for.

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