

## **“Prayer is Surrender”**

**Matthew 26: 39; 2 Corinthians 12: 7 – 10; Psalm 143:10**

Surrender is giving up, turning possession over, when we allow someone or something to have power over us. We remember George Washington and how he gave up his Mt. Vernon (private) self so that he could be of service to his country. We remember and honor Abraham Lincoln because he lost himself in the cause of freedom for the African-American people. These great men lost themselves in what they believed in, and in surrendering of self, were able to achieve great things for their fellowmen. History indicates that both of these men were praying men and as they surrendered themselves in prayer they received the wisdom, courage, love and faith they desperately needed to be the leaders they were expected to be. So it is with us. We must lose the “I – that – is” in order to become the “I – that – should – be”. This is done through a continual process of surrendering our will to the will of God. This continual process is prayer.

This idea of surrender cuts across our usual idea of prayer as a method of getting from God what we want; which is basically self-assertion. Prayer must be self-surrender, not simply passive submission. Prayer is a willingness to die on the level of a defeated, empty, ineffective, short-circuited life and a will to live on the level of a victorious, full, effective, God-connected life. It is self-renunciation in order to find God-realization. Our weak and petty self is renounced so that our potential self might be realized. Prayer is the wire surrendering to the current, the child surrendering to the parent, the patient surrendering to the surgeon, the part surrendering to the whole. Prayer is life surrendering to the abundant life. We see examples of this type of surrender in the scriptures.

1. Jesus Christ. (Matthew 26:39). In this prayer we hear Jesus surrendering to his heavenly Father. In (vss. 42; 44) we hear the continuation of the prayer until Jesus is satisfied that indeed total surrender has been accomplished, and thereby he became the supreme model for our learning. In the Garden of Eden if there had been a prayer it would have been, “Not your will but mine”, and that separated man from God. The prayer in Gethsemane, “not as I will, but as you will”, brings anguish to the one who prayed it, but it opened the way for mankind to be reunited with God and ultimately opened the gates of glory.
2. The Apostle Paul. (2 Corinthians 12: 7 – 10). Paul had seen great things in a vision, and there could have been the tendency for Paul to boast and think of himself rather highly in regards to other people. So we find he was given a “thorn in the flesh”, something to remind him that he was human. Paul prayed three times to have that thorn removed, whatever it was, But Christ had other intents. He said I will not remove it but I will give you sufficient grace to live with it. Paul’s consistent praying led him to surrender to the will of Christ and Paul was given great power for amazing works throughout his life and ministry. Therefore Paul could say in (vs. 10b), “For when I am weak, I am strong”. This adds meaning to the words in (Romans 8: 28); “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”

3. David. (Psalm 143: 10). As we read through this psalm we see as David surrenders in prayer, he becomes teachable, and receptive to God's will. He acknowledges God's ability to lead and guide into the ways of righteousness. Until there is surrender there is no willingness to follow God or even seek his way for our life.

A branch that is not surrendered to the vine, but cut off and on its own, is not free; but dead. A person who does not surrender in prayer isn't free, he is futile. He is a blind man who won't surrender to the surgeon in order to see, however he is free to remain blind. As we learn from Jesus Christ, Paul and David, until we surrender our weakness in prayer, we will never become victorious in Christ.

O God, our Father, forgive us in that we apparently fear to surrender our stubborn will to your saving will. We seem to be afraid of life. Help us to understand the great adventure of prayer, that it may be no side-line activity but the life giving source of our relationship with you father God. In the name of your son, Jesus , Amen.

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