

## I Surrender

I could not understand why the Lord had forsaken me, especially concerning issues He made clear in His promises to us through the scripture. Why, God, have you abandoned me, I asked in earnest prayer? I know God does not deny His children of any of the things He has promised. Then He showed me; I had not yet surrendered myself, my self, my will, to Him.

I always knew there were parts of me in reservation. I'm sure my reason for holding out was ultimately that I did not want to give up my choice or control of the direction of my life. It secretly terrified me, in fact. Seek to give someone else full, absolute control of *my life*?? There are things I don't want to give up or answer for. Worse yet, first I'll be releasing the daily control of my life, and the next thing you know I will be a missionary sleeping on a grass mat in a hut. This is actually the sort of things I feared.

However, I also know that the Lord is purely good and desires only the best for me. Therefore, if I believed this, how could I deny that he would ever steer me wrong, no matter where He led me? There is simply no way around the fact. Furthermore, Christ is clear in stating we must live in Him and in His example of perfect subjection to the Father. This means letting His Holy Spirit, in us as Christians, be our guiding will and not our own. With that, I asked the Father to give me the courage and faith to trust Him – and then I let go.

On short order, everything changed by leaps and bounds, and it's been quite a journey ever since. I realize now that God wants people around Him who want to be around Him. He won't force anybody. I believe that is why He gave us Free Will. With the gift of His saving grace available to all, any that make the choice to accept and obey Him suddenly have all of His gifts at their disposal in faith through Jesus.

Consider the parable of the Sower in Mark 4:3-20 and ask yourself which patch of ground you are. Trust God and let go if you haven't; God will move mightily in your life far beyond your expectations, as you fulfill your duty in this life – to worship God and surrender yourself, your self, to Him.

### **The Elephant, the Shackle, and Sin**

Have you ever visited a circus and browsed around to see the animals lingering? If so, chances are good you have seen an elephant laying around, a shackle on its leg, secured with a chain staked to the ground. The pachyderm can move about, but only as far as the restraint allows.

The irony, however, is that despite its massive capacity, the elephant is conditioned, perhaps even content, with the fact the chain and stake can somehow confine him.

So it may be for a Christian. Before being saved by Christ, we all are guilty of entangling ourselves in sin. However, a true Christian, following Jesus' indwelling Spirit, is fully forgiven and no longer held down by sin. As true children of God, we enjoy a massive capacity for freedom from the sin that would otherwise confine us. We only need to confess and believe Jesus' promise we are forgiven and free, and live accordingly. We are made blameless in Christ's Righteousness, so in turn we may commune with the Father Himself, praying in His very presence. This is the highest privilege afforded to us through Christ's atonement, for our primary purpose as beings is to worship God.

That elephant's chain can no more really hold him than can sin in a Christian's life, unless either is willing to accept the deception it can. In recognizing who you are as God's child, through Christ, you can shed the constraint which really can't constrain, and live and serve as who you really are – a blameless child of the Mighty Lord.

Father, you are mightier than anything in my life. I am a sinner, who without Jesus' forgiveness am condemned and harnessed in my wrongdoing. Please continue to remind me of who I am as your child, in a blameless state, thanks to your Son who I accept as my Master and Savior. It's in His name I pray. Amen.