



LIVING A LIFE THAT ROCKS!

#2 – SURRENDER: BEYOND THE WHITE FLAG

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JULY 27, 2014

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INTRODUCTION

Some time ago I began a study on what it takes to have the abundant life that Christ promised in John 10:10, where He said:

John 10:9-10 (HCSB)

“I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture. A thief comes only to steal and to kill and to destroy. I have come that they may have life and have it in abundance.”

The word “they” in John 10:10 specifically refers to those who are part of Christ’s flock, His followers. Isaiah 40:31 is the Old Testament parallel to John 10:10 and it’s there that we read:

Isaiah 40:31 (HCSB)

*[but] those who **trust** in the LORD will renew their strength;
they will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary;
they will walk and not faint.*

The strength promised in that passage is for those who “trust in” the LORD.

So who are these sheep? Who are these trusters in the LORD? And how is it that they are the ones that get this promised abundant life and overcoming strength?

THE HEART OF THE MATTER

How many times have you heard it said, “Just invite Jesus into your heart and you will be saved?”

The concept of inviting Jesus into your heart is never stated in the bible. I believe that concept comes from Romans 10:9 where it says:

Romans 10:9

*If you confess with your mouth, “**Jesus is Lord,**” and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.*

Or it may come from an old saying about inviting Christ to the “throne of your heart”. I’m not saying that if you “invite Jesus into your heart” it does no good. But what does that mean? What do the Scriptures really say?

We tend to think of the heart as the seat of our emotions. In the scriptures, the heart represents the core of a person’s being – it speaks of their identity, their soul, the totality of their being. In Romans 10:9, we are to confess that **Jesus is Lord**. Lord is a strong word.

LORD: The NAS New Testament Greek Lexicon

kurios from kuros (supremacy)

- he to whom a person or thing belongs, about which he has power of deciding; master, lord the possessor and disposer of a thing the owner; one who has control of the person, the master
- in the state: the sovereign, prince, chief, the Roman emperor
- is a title of honour expressive of respect and reverence, with which servants greet their master
- this title is given to: God, the Messiah

If you **confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord**, you are saying that you have surrendered all of who you are—all that you have done or will do, all you own, all your abilities and knowledge, all of your accomplishments and all of your defeats, all your dreams, all your fears, all your passions, and all your goals—you surrender it all to Him. That means that you’re the driver, he’s the navigator: He tells you where to go, when to turn, how fast or how slow to go, when and where to stop, what to pick up and what to leave behind—and you do as He says.

Jesus said it this way in Matthew 16:24

*Then Jesus said to His disciples, “**If anyone wants to come with Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me.**”*

But...but...but... what about my dreams? What about my needs? My wants? My desires? They are all His. According to God's Word, if we want to be saved, we must surrender it all.

Repeatedly throughout the new testament Christ followers are referred to as *slaves*. (Some translations use the word *servant*, but *slave* is more accurate. A servant is not owned by the master but works for him. When he's not working for the master he is free to do as he pleases. A slave is owned by the master and is at the master's disposal 24-7-365. Lest you think this too strong, at the beginning of their letters in the New Testament, Paul, Peter, James, Jude and John each referred to himself as a **slave of Christ Jesus**. And they lump us into that category!

1 Peter 2:16 (HCSB)

As God's slaves, live as free people, but don't use your freedom as a way to conceal evil.

Revelation 1:1 (HCSB)

*The revelation of Jesus Christ that God gave Him to show **His slaves** what must quickly take place. He sent it and signified it through His angel to His **slave John**,*

MORE THAN JUST WORDS

And we can't just give it lip service. Jesus warned in Matthew 7:

Matthew 7:21 (HCSB)

²¹ "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord!' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of My Father in heaven.

So we can't just talk about Jesus being our Lord, we have to live like He's our Lord in order to be saved.

So, where do we sign up to become slaves? Who wants to be the first in line? Doesn't sound too great, does it? Not really in keeping with the American ideal of freedom, is it? So, why would you want to become a slave of Christ, to surrender yourself to Him?

Well, there are several reasons to consider.

Big Reason Number 1 – Death and Hell if you don't.

Big Reason Number 2 – Heaven and hope if you do.

OK, those are big reasons, but for most of us, eternity seems a long way away, the "Sweet by-and-by". What about the not-so-sweet here and now?

NOT ENOUGH ROOM

Let's go back to that "ask Christ into your heart" thing... Are you sure you want to spend the rest of your life limited to what's in your heart? The Bible indicates that the human heart is not a great place.

Jeremiah 17:9

The heart is more deceitful than anything else, and incurable—who can understand it?

Mark 7:21-22

²¹ For from within, out of people's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immoralities, thefts, murders, ²² adulteries, greed, evil actions, deceit, promiscuity, stinginess, blasphemy, pride, and foolishness."

WE know that it's not a great place. We know it's full of pain from the past and our own disgusting sins and all manner of junk and crud. And we've built walls of protection that confine us into a self-made prison of a heart. Many years ago, I was praying and meditating and asking God to clean up my heart. He simply responded with, why don't we just go outside into my heart? There's a lot more room there. And He led me out of my dark, cramped, and cluttered world, into wide open spaces to which there was no end. And they were filled with beauty and adventure and the warm sunshine of Christ's love. Paul, talking about his own sinful heart problems in Romans 7, says, "What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this dying body?" He indicates that, as Jeremiah said, as long as we are in this body our hearts are incurably sinful. So why stay there.

SWIMMING IN LOVE

In Vacation Bible School we learned that ***"Even though you do wrong...Jesus loves you!"***

I shared this illustration to try to show what true salvation is like.

As we read earlier, Romans 10:9 says:

If you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. – Romans 10:9

What does the Bible mean by "you will be saved?" Saved from what?

"For all have sinned [done wrong things] and fall short of the glory of God." - Romans 3:23

It goes on to say:

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” - Romans 6:23

That word “death” means that, even while we are alive here on earth, our lives can become cold, hard, dry, and empty, and we can sometimes feel like life is not worth living – **Kind of like this sponge!** (Uncover sponge and accessories, but do not uncover tub of water yet)

This sponge doesn’t seem very exciting or very full of life. Actually, it feels kind of dead. It’s hard. It’s dry. It’s rough. It’s not very flexible. And it’s certainly not exciting. This sponge is all on its own.

Sometimes we feel kind of dead deep inside. We try to feel more alive by adding things to our life. We add more friends (**stack other sponges onto sponge**), or we add more money (**pour on salt**), more things (**add marbles.**) But none of that stuff makes us any more alive deep inside. As a matter of fact, all of that stuff just falls away over time. **(Dump it all off)**

But our verse says God’s gift to us is eternal *LIFE*. With God, Life means warm, full of Christ’s love and full of Christ’s power. When we have God’s gift, we are saved from the lifeless life we’ve been living and we receive the life of Christ Jesus, God’s Son which fills us to overflowing.

But how do we receive that gift of life? (look at sponge)

Romans 10:9 says that we have to do two things. Remember? ***If you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.***

One thing we have to do is ***believe that God raised Jesus from the dead.***

Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins... all of us and all of our sins. The Bible tells us:

“But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” - Romans 5:8

So, even though you do wrong...Jesus loves you!”

On the third day after Jesus died on the cross for our sins, He rose from the dead to give us life. In doing so He proved that He was God’s Son. He proved that He had power to bring dead things to life. In order to receive God’s gift of life, you have to believe that Jesus is God’s Son and that He has power to give life to dead things – and He proved that by giving life back to Himself after He died on the cross.

But in order for His gift of life to come alive in you, in order to be saved, Romans 10:9 says you have to ***‘confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,”***...What does that mean?

To confess means to tell the truth – to tell about something that has already happened. So we have to tell about how Jesus *is* LORD in our life. Let me see if I can demonstrate this better.

What Jesus wants to do is to give us a new life! In the book of 2nd Corinthians, the Bible tells us:

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” - II Corinthians 5:17

In Christ?!? How do we get into Christ? **(Uncover tub of water)** Let’s use this tub of water to represent Jesus and His love. What the bible teaches is that, when we make Jesus Christ the LORD of our lives, we surrender ourselves to Him. **(Drop sponge into tub of water)** We fall into Him. We trust Him with everything, the bad things we’ve done, **(stir sponge around in water)** the good things we do, **(stir,)** our needs, **(stir,)** our hopes, **(stir,)** our dreams... We trust it all to Him. When we do, everything changes! **(Pick sponge up out of water)** When we are *in Christ*, He is also *in US!* **(Show water dripping off sponge)** He softens us, **(bend sponge)** fills us, **(squeeze a bit)** and gives us purpose and hope. His hopes and dreams for us are bigger than anything we could come up with for ourselves. **(Point to tub and Drop sponge back into tub of water & stir)**

As a matter of fact, the Bible teaches that when we are In Christ and He is In Us, we can overflow to others **(squeeze water from wet sponge onto dry sponges)**. And because Christ is in us when we are in Him, we can do things we could never do on our own.

BENEFITS IN CHRIST

What are the benefits of being in Christ? Of surrendering and becoming His slave?

John 10:27-30 [Eternal life & Eternal Security of those who are In Christ]

- ***I give them eternal life, and they will never perish—ever!
No one will snatch them out of My hand.***

In Ephesians 1

Eph 1:3-14 (HCSB)

- ***.. the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ... has blessed us with every spiritual blessing ... in Christ;***
- ***in Him ... [we are] holy and blameless in His sight.***
- ***[we are] adopted through Jesus Christ for [God] Himself (we become part of the royal family)***
- ***In Him we have redemption through His blood, and***

- *the forgiveness of our trespasses*
- *In Him we were also made His inheritance* — His prize possession
- *In Him ... when you believed—[you] were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit.* — forever secure

In Eph 2:3-6 (HCSB)

- *God, ... made us alive with the Messiah even though we were dead in trespasses.*
- *He also raised us up with Him and seated us with Him in the heavens, in Christ Jesus,*

John 15:5,7 (HCSB)

- *“I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains **in Me** and I in him **produces much fruit**, because you can do nothing without Me.*
- *If you remain **in Me** and My words remain in you, **ask whatever you want and it will be done for you.***

INVITATION

Some of you may feel that you are dead (**pick up a dry sponge**) and you would like to make Jesus your Lord, you want to abandon yourself to Him (**drop it into tub of water**) so that He can give you a new life and fill you and help you to overflow to others.

I’m going to pray for us and then we’ll sing “I Surrender All”.

Invitation to Surrender, Discipleship, Ministry, Church Membership, Rededication, etc.

Prayer