

Let us begin looking at Step 6, as we look into the 12 Steps with God

Step 6 – Surrender – We were entirely ready to give God control of our lives and help us move from a focus on self to one of humility and a concern for others.

Tonight, we transition from Steps looking at a relationship with God and identification of our sin in our lives to the surrender of our life, our will. Yes, the lives that we are unable to manage on our own, we need to surrender to a loving God that truly knows best!

How do we surrender control of our lives to God? What does that even mean? Here again, the Bible has a lot to teach us about this matter.

I think it may help us to split our answer to this question into two sections:

- 1) What it means to give God control of our lives, and
- 2) How we give God control of our lives.

What does it mean to give God control of your life?

Because we have already acknowledged our sin has led to wreckage in our lives, we have come to a place where we are ready to try a vastly different approach. Our perfect and holy God can obviously manage our lives better than we. It is time to move over and let Him jump into the driver's seat...it will be an interesting, fulfilling ride.

We must understand that this does not mean that we become passive observers of God living our lives for us, but that we no longer make decisions based on selfish criteria. We consider God's purpose and perspectives for each of life's decisions.

1 Cor. 10:31, "So, whether you eat or drink, do all to the glory of God."

In the context of this verse, a church is being admonished for problems they were allowing in the area of the Lord's Supper. They were doing things very selfishly. The rich were feasting and becoming drunk with the excess, and the poor had nothing. Like us in our lives, when we focus solely on selfish desires, we tended to be people of extremes. To correct that and put God in control means that we consider everything in life with the question – does it exalt Him? Our comfort, our happiness, or our pleasure is no longer our primary consideration. It is about what God desires. This does not mean that serving Him whole heartedly is nothing but a bleak existence; because He in turn sends comfort, happiness, and pleasure to those in His service.

Philippians 1:9-11, "It is my prayer that your love may abound more and more... to the glory and praise of God."

These verses put a goal at the end of our love for God and others: *the glory and praise of God*. The purpose of life is the exaltation of God. When we get that right, He becomes our first counselor, our first consultant, and our first authority. Giving God control means living for Him and it gives us a richer life than we would have had on our own.

How do you give God control of your life?

If giving control of your life means living for God's glory, exalting Him in every thought, word, or deed; then we must determine how that is accomplished. In his famous work on life with all its struggles, pursuits, and issues; Solomon draws a remarkable conclusion in Ecclesiastes,

Ecclesiastes 12:13, "The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man."

...Giving God control of your life starts with fearing Him and keeping His commandments.

Jesus taught in the Gospel of Matthew:

Matthew 10:28 *“And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.” –*

This fear of God is the result of knowing His power and authority to sit in judgement over a life lived without regard for God, focusing on self, and rejecting Jesus Christ’s sacrifice on our behalf. He does not have to ask your permission. He does not have to follow procedures. He does not have to stick to any protocol. God can justly hold us accountable for our sin. That should cause us to fear Him.

Jesus also taught in the Gospel of John:

John 15:14, *“You are my friends if you do what I command you.”*

To be a Christian is to do what Christ tells us. His Word is full of commands for us to follow as His people. To obey the commands of our God is half of the equation in fulfilling our duty as God’s people. Therefore, we must study the Bible, identifying the commands so that we can respond in obedience.

As we learn to obey God, He continually shows us areas of sin in our lives. Those areas of sin may be not understanding God’s Word correctly and/or not applying God’s Word to our lives. Regardless of the sin and the source, we can make corrections and makes strides toward spiritual maturity. We give God control of our lives by obedience to Him. This means that we must grow in our relationship with Him, so we know what He requires of us.

2 Timothy 3:16-17, *“All scripture is breathed out by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”*

God’s Word is the means whereby God tells us what He wants us to be – complete and equipped for every good work. The more time we spend studying the Bible and obediently applying it in our lives; the more we are giving God control in our lives. We need to focus on obedience and walking in faith, God is responsible for the results.

Consider and Confess

1. How much of the Bible do you know? (Can you identify major themes, characters, morals, or key passages?)
2. Do you hesitate to surrender to God because you think He will set the bar too high for you? If yes, why?
3. Submitting to God is a challenge to our pride, yet we realize it must happen if we are to have victory over the life issues we face in our recovery. What parts of your life do you know God wants you to change but you are hesitant to change?
4. What behaviors in your life have you changed out of obedience to God?
5. What are some good things that have happened as a result of your obedience and changes you have made?
6. What kinds of bad things have happened in your life because of your disobedience?
7. Is there someone you know who models a surrendered life very well? If yes, how much personal discipline do you think they exercise every day to live such a life? If not, where do you think you could find such a person?
8. Change can happen. Find a character in the Bible whose life was radically changed by God and take note how God changed them.

Looking forward:

This has been a sobering look at what it means to give God control in our lives – understanding God’s Word, applying God’s Word in our lives, and trusting God all along the way. In the next step we will begin looking at selfishness and the cost of a focus on self. The truth is that a focus on self often has a significant cost to others in our lives – spouses, children, parents, co-workers, etc.