

Unconditional Surrender

1. *Luke 14:26-32 "Or what king, when he sets out to meet another king in battle, will not first sit down and consider whether he is strong enough with ten thousand men to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand? "Or else, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace."*
 - a. This troubling passage sounds as if it is about making peace with a stronger foe. The truth is, if you are going to be destroyed, you choose to find out if there is any way to survive without being destroyed by a superior force. In those days (as now) unconditional surrender was the norm for a stronger army to demand. They would require absolute submission before granting peace.
 - b. V33 *"So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions."* And so, we find the rights of the disciple are surrendered completely and unconditionally to our Lord.
2. **What is unconditional surrender?**
 - a. **Unconditional surrender is a surrender without conditions, in which no guarantees are given to the surrendering party, other than a cessation of hostilities.** An unconditional surrender means that the surrendering party is utterly at the mercy of their conquerors.
 - b. Seeking an Unconditional Surrender from Japan was something that was debated within President Roosevelt and President Truman's inner circle of advisors and which considering the massive losses that America would have to suffer to invade the Japanese homeland. It was only with the A-Bomb, that America could squeeze that unconditional nature of surrender from our foes. Even between the two bombs, even after the second bomb, a third (the last in our arsenal) was being prepared, Japan's leadership grappled with the necessity and "honor" of an unconditional surrender.
 - i. For the A-Bomb doubters who have no connection to WW2 and like to rewrite history, My grandfather became the Military Governor of Hiroshima after the war. He entertained former Japanese Army Officers and governmental leaders in his home. One of the documents that the Japanese Army staff produced was called, "The Fundamental Policy to Be Followed Henceforth in the Conduct of the War," and which stated that the Japanese people would fight to extinction rather than surrender.
 - c. **So why unconditional surrender?**
 - i. Why unconditional? Many don't realize that the 1919 Versailles treaty wasn't an unconditional surrender to conclude World War I. Even as it imposed harsh sanctions and reparations upon Germany, it didn't keep the Germans (Adolf Hitler) from later claiming that they had not been militarily defeated,
 - ii. **Unconditional surrender is when the loser admits defeat!** No other form of surrender (Versailles) is sufficient to convince a formerly hostile party that they have lost, been defeated, or been totally vanquished. It communicates the utter and irreversible nature of that defeat.
 - iii. Some say that unconditional surrender leads to a lengthening of the hostilities because it is such a severe surrender. Maybe so. But it is the only surrender that is complete.
 - iv. A surrender is not a surrender unless it is truly complete and total and unconditional. Anything short of that is a truce between enemies. (Like Korea- with whom we are still unofficially at war with to this day!) Yet Japan and Germany became not only our friends but our allies.
3. What does surrender have to do with being a Christian?
 - a. *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter.* (Mt. 7:21)
 - b. The bible describes the disciples of Jesus calling Him "Lord."
 - i. Lord means ruler.
 - ii. To use the word to address someone indicates your willingness to follow and serve him.

- c. Somewhere in the last century, we have concocted a formula for becoming a Christian that isn't in the bible. We have told people that if they "say a prayer that says they are sorry for having sinned and invite Jesus to come into their heart" that they will be saved.
 - i. I invite you to find where the bible says that.
 - ii. In fact, the bible says, "*believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved.*" (Acts 16:31).
 - iii. Notice, the key words, "believe" and "Lord" –
 - 1. Belief doesn't mean "I believe God exists." Belief is much deeper than that.
 - 2. Belief is the expression of our faith and trust for Jesus to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves. That is, pay a tremendous price for our rebellion and sin. We place our faith in what Jesus did
 - 3. Lord – means Jesus becomes your master, your ruler and your life itself.
 - 4. Lord means that I cease being the king of my life. There is only one way to come to the place of ceasing to be king. I must surrender!
 - 5. "*If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me*" (Luke 9:23).
 - 6. There is no place that you will find that Jesus teaches an "easy:" or painless salvation. Salvation cost God His Son.

d. A Blank Contract

- i. Most of us would like God to give us a contract with all the details filled in. We want to know what living this life will cost us, we would like to know where God wants us to go, and what He wants us to do...up front!
 - 1. But instead, He hands us a blank sheet of paper and says, "I want you to sign the surrender, and let Me fill in the details. Why? Because I am trustworthy, because I bought you, because you know how much I love you, because you now live for me and not yourself."
 - 2. Signing that blank sheet of paper carries a bunch of risks...
 - a. What if God falls off His throne (fat chance!)
 - b. What if God isn't trustworthy?
 - c. What if He demands stuff that I really enjoy or value?
 - 3. Yet, God will fill in the blanks with love and incomparable wisdom!
- ii. Jesus doesn't offer a weekend Christian experience from which you come back and "return to normal." He doesn't offer an solution to some pain you are feeling. He doesn't offer fire insurance from Hell. Jesus went to His death so we could join Him in living a cross carrying life.

4. Surrender or Commitment to Christ?

- a. I have heard many evangelists ask folks to "commit themselves to Christ."
 - i. **A commitment implies that "I'm still my own person"** but that "I commit (or promise) to do something for you" It retains the right to be independent and self-reliant while obtaining something in exchange for your commitment.
 - ii. Every person who I have seen come to a genuine encounter with Christ came broken or defeated. The act of surrender was not something that anyone had to coerce from them, but rather, they saw it as a small thing to do to find peace.
 - iii. **We aren't "servants of Christ" (diakoneo) we are "slaves of Christ." (doulos).**
 - 1. **We are diakoneo to men but always doulos to God.**
 - 2. **In other words, we lay down the rights to our own lives before God.**
- b. We are an offering. A burnt offering. The burnt offering was completely consumed by the fire in the sacrifice. They represented complete surrender to the will of God. (Romans 12:1)
- c. In marriage, two people don't just commit themselves to each other. They surrender themselves to each other. They give up their rights to themselves and give themselves to one another. We don't see this nowadays, which is part of the reason that surrender seems so unnatural to us.

- d. Surrender means to yield ownership, to relinquish control over what we consider ours: our property, our time, our "rights."
 - i. When we surrender to God, we are simply acknowledging that what we "own" actually belongs to Him.
5. Alabaster Jar:
 - a. Mark 14:3-5 *"While He was in Bethany at the home of Simon the leper, and reclining at the table, there came a woman with an alabaster vial of very costly perfume of pure nard; and she broke the vial and poured it over His head. 4 But some were indignantly remarking to one another, "Why has this perfume been wasted? 5 "For this perfume might have been sold for over three hundred denarii, and the money given to the poor." And they were scolding her."*
 - b. A Denarii was a day's wages, this bottle of burial perfume was a year's wages. By today's standards, 40 to 50 thousand dollars. It was in a sealed jar, that could only be opened by breaking the neck of the jar, so it couldn't be resealed. This likely was this woman's family heirloom, family treasure...and she freely gave it (and herself) to Jesus. That was surrender.
6. God wants your surrender.
 - a. What are you holding back? Unconditional surrender means "I'm not turning back!" I'm here to stay.
 - b. Have you simply "committed" yourself to Christ but not surrendered?
 - c. Is that all He is worth to you? Can you look in His eyes on the cross and say, "I'll give you a bit but not all?"
7. God sees you as having incredible, infinite worth! (But I feel so worthless!)
 - a. Do you pay a high price for something worthless or for something valuable?
 - b. God paid the price of His only begotten Son for you because you were valuable. You may have lost your SENSE of value, but you never lost your value. He created you to be his child, and because Sin got in the way, you have been so far short of that. So God purchased you with an INFINITELY HIGH PRICE to secure your future and your destiny and to let you know how valuable and precious you are!
 - c. Won't you come to Him and surrender today?

- d. Jesus came to this earth not simply to whisk us away to heaven or to make His Father our favorite Jeanie in a bottle. Jesus came to conquer!
 - e. You might respond, but he didn't come as a military ruler, he had no army, he had no weapons...how could he come to conquer? He came to defeat not only the prince of darkness under whose dominion mankind had become slaves, but also to defeat our rebellion, because we had aligned ourselves with the devil.
 - f. Why did Jesus come to earth? Was it just to save me because I was so evil?
 - i. "God so loved the world that He gave..."
 - ii. Why would God sacrifice the most valuable thing He had? Certainly, if we were worthless, that wouldn't be a good exchange!
 - iii. **The truth is, you only pay something valuable for something valuable!**
 - iv. You and I were valuable, because we had been created to be sons and daughters of God.
 - v. We were valuable because we had been made in the image and likeness of God!
 - vi. We were valuable, of infinite value to God Himself, by nature of whose Image we were made in.
 - vii. (And we speak of ourselves as "worthless sinners.") God help us for such blasphemy.
 - viii. If we were worthless, God wouldn't have paid an infinite price for us! We were infinitely valuable, and that is why He paid an infinitely high price for us.
8. General U.S.S. Grant in his first victory (at Ft. Donelson) was asked by the Confederate General for discussion of terms, to which Gen. Grant replied, "no terms except unconditional and immediate surrender can be accepted." The newspapers took the US initials in his name to mean "unconditional surrender" Grant.
9. Notes
- a. To surrender heart, body, and soul to God, one must understand that as humans we are triune beings. We are made up of our heart/mind, body, and soul. Yielding one part of ourselves without yielding the other is impossible. If we try to separate ourselves, we become "double minded" and therefore unstable (James 1:8). However, the initial surrender is only the beginning. The surrender of your heart, body, and soul to God is an ongoing process that begins the moment one is born again as a child of God and it continues until He calls the believer home or Jesus comes again. (<http://www.allaboutfollowingjesus.org/how-to-surrender-your-heart-body-and-soul-to-god-faq.htm>)
 - b. Surrender to God - If I Do That, What Am I Giving Up?
 - i. If we surrender to God, what are we giving up? Does it mean, as it does for the enemy in battle, to give up on victory in our lives? Is God holding a gun to our heads and forcing us to give Him everything we have, like a bandit or mugger might do? To be sure, there are those who are willing to portray God in that way, especially where self-gain is involved. But when we come to know the true character and nature of God, we quickly discover how false that image is. (allaboutfollowingJesus.org)
 - ii. Surrender means to yield ownership, to relinquish control over what we consider ours: our property, our time, our "rights." When we surrender to God, we are simply acknowledging that what we "own" actually belongs to Him. He is the giver of all good things. We are responsible to care for what God has given us, as stewards of His property, but by surrendering to God, we admit that He is ultimately in control of everything, including our present circumstances. Surrendering to God helps us to let go of whatever has been holding us back from God's best for our lives. By surrendering to God, we let go of whatever has kept us from wanting God's ways first. (allaboutfollowingJesus.org)
 - iii. God did not say to Adam and Eve, "you can't eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." Rather, we read in Genesis 2:16-17: And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." Did God really say that you couldn't eat from that tree?" Couldn't or shouldn't? One is an edict the other is a statement of love!

iv.

10. Another Story of surrender:

- a. Teruo Nakamura – the last Japanese soldier to surrender – in 1945. When he surrendered he thought he would be tried and executed for killing a number of farmers who he was afraid of while hiding. But what happened was he received a full and total pardon as a result of his surrender, and was able to return to his homeland. (sound familiar?)
 - i. We stand before God and recognize our guilt, and it seems as though, if we surrender, we will be treated unfairly. What we don't realize is that God (even moreso than the benevolent USA) is loving and cannot wait to pardon us as soon as we surrender and admit our guilt.