

The Keys To A Surrendered Life – Part 2

Luke 9:23

Introduction:

1. God's plan for the believer is found in Galatians 5:22-23. This describes for us the character and attitude that Christ is desiring to produce in us and through us.
2. These are wonderful, priceless commodities, but they don't come to us while self is enthroned on our heart. They come to us when we surrender our will to His and allow Christ's Spirit to flow through us freely. In Ephesians 5:18, it is called being "*filled (controlled) with the Spirit.*"
3. When self is enthroned on our hearts, it restricts the flow of God's Holy Spirit in and through us. As Christians, we can quench and grieve Christ's Spirit. Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 5:19
4. If you are saved, Christ's divine, resurrection life is in you. How can we allow Christ's Spirit to flow through us? It takes a heart of surrender. What does that require? In Luke 9:23, Jesus tells us clearly what it requires.

The first key to a surrendered life - a denying of the flesh.

The second key to a surrendered life – a dying to my way.

1. In our text, Jesus said that in order to come after Him you must take up your cross daily.
2. What is your cross? What did Jesus mean? Many people think that their cross is a certain thing or a certain person – “this old car is my cross to bear, my job is my cross to bear, my husband is my cross to bear, etc.”
3. But when someone said the word “cross” in Jesus' day, immediately, everybody knew what it meant – death! The cross meant death.
4. Jesus was clearly teaching that if you want to follow me, you must die to **your** way and follow **my** way – die to your way and realize that I am life, I am your only life source, and my way is life.
5. Your cross is not a person, a thing, or an event. It is your entire life. It is dying to self and surrendering everything over to Christ.

- It is saying, “Lord, I am yours – lock, stock, and barrel. No longer will I do things my way, but I am coming after You and doing things Your way.” Romans 12:1
6. While it is reasonable for a believer to surrender their way to Christ’s way, it is a lot more difficult than one might think. Why? We very much like having it our way.
 - Remember the hamburger chain whose motto was, “Have it your way?” (I still remember the jingle) That philosophy appeals to the most basic desire of a man’s nature.
 7. Left to ourselves, we want it **our** way. We **like** having it our way.
 - Satan didn’t tempt Adam and Eve to steal, to kill, or commit adultery. He tempted them to simply live independently of God, convincing them to do things their **own** way.
 - Satan asked, “You want that fruit?” He said, “Take it and enjoy it. It doesn’t matter what God said. Have it **your** way.”
 8. Our biggest problem is that we want our **own** way, which is in opposition to God’s way. This has always been man’s biggest struggle. Judges 17:6; Psalm 81:12; Proverbs 12:15; 28:26; Isaiah 5:21; 53:6; 2 Timothy 3:2
 9. Adam was not made to live independently of God. He **was** given volition to make decisions, but it was in the context of an ongoing relationship with God, and in the context of God’s will regarding his life, the earth, the Garden of Eden, his relationship with Eve, etc.
 10. Adam was not autonomous. He needed God. Satan’s deception was, “It’s no big deal. God is just trying to ruin your fun. Your way is fine. There is nothing wrong with it at all. Eat the fruit, and you’ll be like God. You won’t need Him anymore at all.”
 - This is the big lie that Satan and your flesh want you to believe.
 11. That attitude is what led to Satan’s fall (Isaiah 14:13-14). That is the same satanic spirit of independence and rebellion that has been cloned into our fleshly nature, whereby we desire our own way. Ephesians 2:2-3
 - Anything that gives man the illusion that he can make life work apart from God only makes him a more powerful rebel against God and destroys his usefulness to God.
 - You can have it your way and make it work. Proverbs 14:12
 - So many times I have had people say to me, “I know what God says but...” At that point, you’re done. You’re toast. You are saying, “I want it my way.”

12. Christ is calling us to renounce our own way of self-dependency and submit our hearts to the way of Christ. **Any change** that will ultimately help a person must move him away from autonomy and must move him toward dependence upon his Creator. Psalm 100:3
 - See also, John 15:5; 2 Corinthians 3:5; 2 Samuel 22:31; Proverbs 3:5-6
13. This is the call of Jesus in verse 23. To be a true Christ-follower, you must put aside **your** way and allow Christ's Spirit to flow through you to do things **His** way. By the way, that's when you get the wonderful fruit we read and talked about last week. Galatians 5:22-23
14. Here is the key – to look to anything other than Christ in order to make life work is to forsake Him and cease following Him.
15. If we are going to surrender to Christ, we must daily die to our way, and our daily prayer must be similar to Psalm 25:4 and Psalm 27:11.

The third key to a surrendered life – a decision to follow Christ.

1. Look at the end of verse 23 – “*follow me.*” I die to my way, but live unto His way. Why do I die to my way? Because I believe His way is better and right.
2. Trust is the key. We must trust and obey. It's not complicated at all, but is it always easy? No. But is it complicated? No.
3. The Christian life is not an easy life, but it isn't a complicated life. Complications arise when we go our own way.
 - Ever try to lead a kid or dog, who is resisting, someplace that they don't want to go? It creates quite a bit of tension.
4. The way out of a tense situation is to simply ask, “Am I following Christ or me? Am I following my way or His way? In this situation before me, am I going to please God or simply please myself?”
5. When we think of a particular issue or sin that we struggle with, we often think we have been **defeated**. But in reality, we have only been **disobedient**.
6. Am I choosing to follow my flesh rather than Christ? There are only two choices on the shelf – pleasing God or pleasing self; following my way or following Christ's way.

In Conclusion:

1. Do you want to pursue Christ? Jesus said that if a person will come after Him, there are three keys:

- A denying of the flesh – anything that pulls me away from Christ, I turn loose of it and let it go.
 - A dying to my way – I have no life apart from Him. My way is death; His way is life. He knows the path of life.
 - A decision to follow Christ. I must trust and obey.
2. Here is the twist to all of this. The way to true life is to die (vs. 24), but to die to self is to truly live. Following my flesh and doing things my way leads to death. But when I die to my flesh and die to my way, I live! Ezekiel 33:11; James 5:20; Galatians 2:20