

# ABSOLUTE SURRENDER

By Andrew Murray



# Absolute Surrender

*Now Ben-Hadad king of Aram mustered his entire army. Accompanied by thirty-two kings with their horses and chariots, he went up and besieged Samaria and attacked it. He sent messengers into the city to Ahab king of Israel, saying, "This is what Ben-Hadad says: 'Your silver and gold are mine, and the best of your wives and children are mine?' " The king of Israel answered, "Just as you say, my lord the king. I and all I have are yours."*

**1 Kings 20:1-4**

What Ben-Hadad asked for was *absolute surrender*, what Ahab gave was what was asked of him—*absolute surrender*. I want to use these words "Just as you say, my lord the king. I and all I have are yours"—as the words of absolute surrender every believer should render to God. We have stated it before, but it bears repeating: The absolute surrender of everything into His hands is necessary. If our hearts are willing for that, there is no limit to what God will do for us or to the blessing He will bestow.

"Absolute surrender" let me tell you where I discovered this term. I have used it often, and you may be familiar with it. Some time ago, in Scotland, I was discussing the condition of the church with a group of Christian workers. In our group there was a godly man whose main ministry was that of training others in Christian service. I asked him what he thought was the greatest need of the church and the message that should be preached. He answered very quietly and simply, but

determinedly: "Absolute surrender to God is the main thing." The words struck me as never before. He went on to tell me that if the workers that he trains are sound on that one point, even though they may be lacking in some areas, they are teachable and always improve; whereas those who are not totally surrendered, very often go back on their commitment and leave the work. The condition for obtaining God's full blessing is *absolute surrender* to Him.

I desire by God's grace to make this point unquestionably clear: God answers your prayers for spiritual blessing with this one requirement: the willingness to surrender yourself absolutely into His hands. God knows the hearts of those who have done it and of those who long to do it but still have doubts or fears. Then there are those who have said they surrendered, but have miserably failed, and who feel condemned because they have not found the secret of the power to live a consecrated life.

Let me say, first of all, God *requires it of us*. It has its foundation in the very nature of God. God cannot do otherwise. God is the Fountain of Life, the only Source of existence, power, and goodness. Throughout the universe there is nothing good unless God is in it. God has created all that we see around us of nature. It is all absolutely surrendered to Him in the sense that God works in creation just as He pleases. When God clothes the lily with its beauty, is it not yielded, surrendered, to God? It has no power in itself to control its beauty, its life, or its death. As God's redeemed children, do you imagine that God can accomplish His work in you if there is only half or a part of your life surrendered to

Him *Ye cannot*. God is life, love, blessing, power, and infinite beauty, and He delights to communicate Himself to every believer who is prepared to receive Him; but any lack of absolute surrender will hinder God. Still He comes to you and claims what is due Him.

You know in daily life what absolute surrender is. You know that everything has to be committed to its particular purpose and service. I have a pen in my pocket that is surrendered to its purpose of writing and must be surrendered to my hand if I am to write with it properly. If someone else has a partial hold on it, I cannot write with it. My coat is absolutely yielded to me to cover my body. It is its purpose. A building may be entirely yielded to church services. And do you expect that when you are an immortal being, in the divine nature that you have received by regeneration, God can accomplish His work without your having entirely surrendered to Him? *It is not possible*. The temple of Solomon was absolutely surrendered to God when it was dedicated to Him. And each of us is a temple of God in which God will dwell and work mightily on one condition: absolute surrender to Him. God claims it, God is worthy of it, and without it God cannot accomplish His blessed work in us.

Second, *God not only claims it, He will work it out*. I am sure many believers say, "Absolute surrender implies so much!" Recently I received a note from someone that read, "I have experienced so much trial and suffering, and there is so much of the self-life still remaining; I dare not face entire surrender, because I know it will cause even more trouble and agony." Can it be that believers have such thoughts of Him? I come to you

with this message: God does not ask you to make a full surrender in your own strength or by the power of your will; God wants to help you. It is God that works in us, both to will and to do of His good pleasure." And that is our great need—to go to our knees before God until our hearts learn to believe that the everlasting God Himself will come into our lives to change what is wrong, to conquer what is evil, and to work what is well-pleasing in His sight. God Himself will work it in you.

Look at the men in the Old Testament. Do you think it was by accident that God found a man like Abraham, the father of the faithful and the friend of God? Do you think it was Abraham himself, apart from God, who had such faith and obedience and devotion? You know that is not so. God raised him up and prepared him as an instrument for His glory. God said to Pharaoh, "For this cause have I raised you up, to show my power in you." And if God said that of him, will He not say it of every child of His? I want to encourage you to cast out every fear. Come with your meager desire, and if there is fear that it is not strong enough to make your surrender, realize that God can make you willing, if you ask Him. If there is anything holding you back, or any sacrifice you are afraid to make, come to God and prove how gracious He is. He will never command of you what He will not enable you to do! God offers to work this absolute surrender in you. All the searching, hungering, and longing in your heart is a result of His work. Jesus who lived a life of absolute surrender is living in your heart by God's holy Spirit. You may have hindered Him in the past, but He purposes through your humiliation and waiting upon Him to help you find the place of full surrender.

*Third, God not only requires our surrender and works it in us, but God accepts it when we bring it to Him.*

Remember, when you do come with what you think is your absolute surrender, it may, as far as your feelings go, be imperfect. You may doubt and hesitantly say, 'Is it absolute?' But remember the man to whom Christ said, 'If you can believe, all things are possible to him than believes'; his heart was afraid and he cried out, "Lord, I believe, help my unbelief? That was a faith that triumphed over the Evil One. If you come and say, "Lord, I yield myself in absolute surrender to you? even though it may be with a trembling heart and without feeling—"I do not feel the power; I do not feel the determination; I do not feel the assurance"—your surrender will be received. Do not be afraid to come just as you are, and even in the midst of your trembling, the power of the holy Spirit will work.

The holy Spirit works with mighty power even when on the human side everything appears weak. Look at the Lord Jesus Christ in Gethsemane. We read that he, "through the Eternal Spirit, offered himself as a sacrifice to God. The Almighty Spirit of God was enabling him to do it. And yet what agony and fear and exceeding sorrow came over him as he prayed! Externally you can see no sign of the mighty power of the Spirit, but the Spirit of God was there. Even so, while you are weak and struggling and fearful, through faith in the hidden work of God's Spirit, yield yourself. The first step in absolute surrender is to believe that God accepts your surrender. That is a point we often miss. Be occupied with God, not yourself, in your commitment to Him. We want God to be present with us in our daily life, to have

the right place, to be all in all. To experience this, we must look away from ourselves and to God. Though you may feel inadequate and unworthy, full of failure and sin and fear, bow before Him in simplicity and say, "O God, I accept your terms; I have pleaded for blessing on myself and others. I have accepted your terms of absolute surrender." While your heart speaks this deep within, God takes note of it and writes it down in His book; God is present at that very moment and takes complete possession of you. You may not feel it, you may not realize it, but trust Him. Who can estimate the work that can be done in and through the church if we would individually and collectively say, "I make an absolute surrender to God."

*Fourth, God not only claims my surrender, accepts it when I offer it, but He maintains it as well.* This is a great difficulty with many. People say, "I have often been moved at a meeting and have consecrated myself to God, but it has always dissipated. It may last for a week or a month, but it fades away and after a time is completely gone."

It does not have to be this way. When God has begun the work of absolute surrender in you by accepting your offer of surrender, He promises to care for it and to keep it. Do you believe this?

In this matter of surrender, both God and I are involved I am unworthy and inadequate; God is the everlasting and omnipotent Jehovah. Unworthy one, are you afraid to trust yourself to this mighty God? God is willing. One of God's servants recently pleaded in prayer that each of us might hear His voice asking us, "Do you believe

that I can do this, that I can keep you continually, day by day, and moment by moment?" Remember the beautiful chorus:

Moment by moment I'm kept in His love;  
Moment by moment I've life from above.

If God allows the sun to shine upon you moment by moment, without intermission, will not God let His life shine upon you every moment? And why have you not experienced it? Because you have not trusted God for it or you do not surrender yourself absolutely to God in that trust.



A life of absolute surrender has its difficulties. I do not deny that. Yes, it has something far more than difficulties; it is a like that with humankind is absolutely impossible. But by the grace of God, by the power of the holy Spirit dwelling in us, it is a life to which we are destined and that is possible for us, praise God Let us believe that God will maintain it. Perhaps you have read



the words of George Muller who, on his ninetieth birthday, told of all God's goodness to him. What did he say was the secret of his happiness and of all the blessings that God had given him? He said he believed there were two reasons. The one was that he had been enabled by grace to maintain a clear conscience before God day by day; the other was that he was a lover of God's Word. Yes, a clear conscience in sincere obedience to God day by day, and fellowship with God every day in His Word and prayer- that is a life of absolute surrender.

Such a life has two sides on the one side, *absolute surrender to do what God wants me to do; on the other side, to allow God to work in me what He wants to do.*

On the one side, to do what God wants me to do.

Surrender yourselves absolutely to the will of God. You may not know everything about God's will, but with what you do know, say to the Lord,

"By your grace I desire to do your will in everything, every moment of every day" Say, "Lord God, I desire not a word upon my tongue but for your glory, not a movement of my temper but for your glory, not an emotion of love or hate in my heart but for your glory and according to Your blessed will." Someone says, "Do you think that is possible?" I ask, "What has God promised: What can God do with a vessel absolutely surrendered to Him? God waits to bless us in a way beyond what we expect. "It is written, eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for them that love Him." God has prepared unheard-of things, things you could never think of; blessings much more wonderful than you could imagine, more mighty than

you could conceive. They are divine blessings. Come and say, "I give myself absolutely to God, to His will, to do only what God wants." It is God who will enable you to carry out your surrender.

On the other side, say, "I give myself absolutely to God, *to allow Him to work in me to will and to do of His good pleasure*, as He has promised to do." Yes, the living God wants to work in believers in a way that we cannot understand, but that is what God's Word has revealed, and He wants to work in us every moment of the day. God is willing to maintain our life; only let our absolute surrender be one of simple, childlike, and unbounded trust.

Fifth, *Our absolute surrender to God will result in wonderful blessing*. Remember what Ahab said in our opening text to his enemy King Ben-Hadad: "Just as you say, my lord the king. I and all I have are yours." Shall we not say this to our God and loving Father? If we do say it, God's blessing will come upon us. God calls you to be separate from the world and sin. If we say in all sincerity that all we have and are belong to Him, He will accept it and teach us what it means.

I say again, God will bless you. Have you been praying for blessing? Remember, there must be absolute surrender. God cannot fill you and bless you without it. Absolute surrender is what our souls must yield by divine grace.

Humble yourselves in God's sight and acknowledge that you have grieved the holy Spirit by your self-will, self-confidence, and, self-effort. Bow humbly before Him in

that confession and ask Him to break your heart and to bring you to your knees before Him. Then as you bow before Him, receive God's Word that says in your flesh "there dwells no good thing" and that nothing will help you except another life, which must enter yours. You must deny self once and for all. Denying self must every moment be the power of your life, and then Christ will come in and take possession of you.

When was Peter delivered? When was the change accomplished? It began when Peter wept over his sin; then the holy Spirit came and filled his heart. God the Father loves to give us the power of the Spirit. We have the Spirit of God dwelling within us. We come to God confessing that and praising God for it; and yet confessing how we have grieved the Spirit. And then we bow our knees to the Father to ask that He would strengthen us with all might by the Spirit in the inner man, and that He would fill us with His mighty power. As the Spirit reveals Christ to us, Christ comes to live in our hearts forever, and the self-life is cast out.

As we bow before God in our own humiliation, we will want to also confess before Him the condition of the whole church. No words can fully express our sadness. I wish I had words to speak what I sometimes feel about it. Just think of the believers around you. I am not speaking of nominal Christians or of those professing faith, but I speak of those honest, sincere believers who are not living a life in the full power of God or to His glory. So little power, so little devotion or consecration to God, so little concept of the truth that a believer is one utterly surrendered to God's will! We will want to confess the sins of God's people around us and to

humble ourselves. We are members of a sick body, and the sickness of the body will hinder and break us down, unless we come to God and in confession separate ourselves from partnership with worldliness, with coldness toward each other, unless we surrender ourselves wholly to God.

How much is being done in the spirit of the flesh and in the power of self! How much work, day by day, in which human energy our will and our thoughts about the work is continually manifested and in which there is very little waiting upon God for the power of the holy Spirit! Let us make confession. But as we confess the weakness and sinfulness of work for God among us, let us come back to ourselves. Do you truly desire to be delivered from the power of the self-life? Have you acknowledged the power of self and the flesh and been willing to cast it all at the feet of Christ? *There is deliverance.*

Remember: Death was the path to glory for Christ. For the joy set before Him He endured the cross. The cross was the birthplace of His everlasting glory. Do you love Christ? Do you long to be in Christ and not merely like Him? Let death be to you the most desirable thing on earth—death to self and fellowship with Christ. Separation—do you think it a hard thing to be entirely free from the world and by that separation be united to God and His love, by separation to become prepared for living and walking with God every day? Surely we should say, "Anything to bring me to separation, to death, for a life of full fellowship with God and Christ." Come and cast this self-life and flesh-life at the feet of Jesus. Then trust him. Do not try to understand it all, but come in the living faith that Christ will come into

you with the power of his death and the power of his life; then the holy Spirit will bring the whole Christ— Christ crucified and Christ risen and living in glory—into your heart.



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