

Sweet Surrender

Ephesians 5:1-8

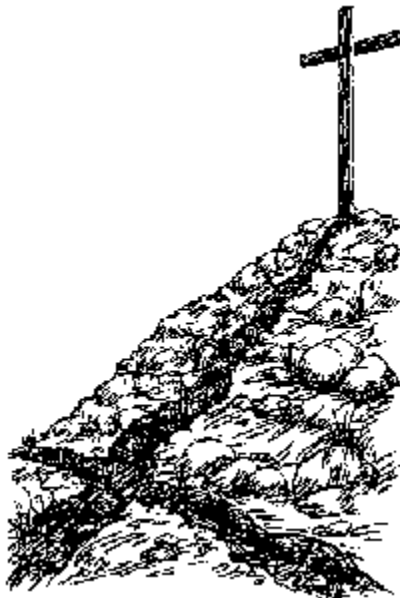
(Ephesians 5:1-8 KJV) "Be ye therefore followers¹ of God, as dear children; {2} And walk² in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor. {3} But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; {4} Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. {5} For this ye know, that no whore monger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. {6} Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. {7} Be not ye therefore partakers with them. {8} For ye were sometimes darkness, but now *are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:*"

¹ mimetes {pronounced mim-ay-tace'}, imitators.

² peripateo {pronounced per-ee-pat-eh'-o}, Present Active Imperative, live your life, walk, move forward.

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There is a strange belief in many local Churches that the love of God mandates or demands that we endorse or **turn a blind eye to worldly standards**. Some of you may not even understand what I mean by “worldly standards”, for worldliness has, indeed, crept into many congregations. It is impossible, however, to believe that this Book is the error-free Word of God and *not see* that the Christian - the one who professes Christ as Savior - is *expected to live his life as someone who belongs to God*.

We are **not endorsing a doctrine of salvation by works here**, nor do we think that it is possible to be *good enough* to be admitted to Heaven. When we look at the Scripture we see that there are *none good enough* to get into Heaven on their own. Apart from accepting Christ as Savior you are lost, destined to eternal damnation. The Bible says:

(Galatians 2:21 KJV) "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness *come* by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."

If it is *possible* for someone to live a *good life* by following the Law, **then our Lord Jesus died for no reason**. That is exactly what the Apostle tells us: Righteousness could not come by following

the Law, thus Christ had to die and rise again *for us*. I will not believe that salvation comes of my own works - these are the teachings of the lunatic and the heretic.

(Galatians 2:20 KJV) "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

However, there is another truth: **If you are a Christian then Christ is alive and within you**. You have been changed from what you were to what you are now. You must *surrender* to what you are, and *stand fast against* what you used to be. This is the command of Scripture.

1. If We Are Children, We Must Surrender To God

(Ephesians 5:1-2 KJV) "Be ye therefore followers¹ of God, as dear children; {2} And walk² in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor."

If I were to summarize this text, the best word I
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could think of to summarize it would be *surrender*. The Christian is exhorted to *surrender*:

(a) We surrender to the Father as dear children should.

(b) We surrender to the Son as dear brothers and sisters would.

(c) We surrender ourselves as living sacrifices, just as Jesus surrendered Himself for us on the Cross.

The Christian should be, first and foremost, an *imitator of God*. That is the literal translation of Ephesians 5:1 - imitators. But we do not imitate God *just because*. We imitate God *as dear Children*, as believers adopted into the Family of God.

Children generally imitate their parents. I have heard, and I suspect that its true, that children of abusing and cruel parents grow up to be abusing and cruel their selves. As one of God's under shepherds, a pastor, I have often seen *parents embarrassed by their children*. It is true that children, like tape players, often repeat in public what was said in private. I myself have been

embarrassed by my children's tongues - and by what came out of my mouth to cause it.

God, however, is a perfect Father. Though we did not deserve it, “**(1 John 4:19 KJV) 'We love him, because he first loved us.'**” God's love was not a *selfish* love, but as the Scripture says:

(Romans 5:8 NASB) "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Christ died for us *while we were yet dead* in sin. Christ paid the penalty for us *while we were yet blind* and uncaring.

I am reminded of the time that Jesus healed *ten lepers*. Leprosy was a terrible disease in ancient times. Though good hygienic practices have reduced that terrible, debilitating disease, it still terrorizes many of the oriental countries.

The leper was commanded by God to *stay outside* of the city, lest the disease spread throughout God's people. Lepers were outcast - lost - and even abandoned by their families.

As our Lord was heading toward Jerusalem, and
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just before He entered a smaller outlying village, Jesus saw ten lepers off **in the distance**. As the Law required they were not in the city. But it's obvious that these people (and they may not have been all men - the text is uncertain) knew Jesus. Perhaps they had heard of Him, the Healer. So they shouted at Him from afar - Luke 17 tells us:

(Luke 17:13 KJV) "And they lifted up *their* voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us."

They *must* have heard of Jesus. They heard that He healed. But they *did not know* Him as Savior. They called Jesus "**Master**", epistates {pronounced ep-is-tat'-ace}, loosely translated as "**boss**". They knew that Jesus was a great Man, but by their words did not recognize Him as Savior. He was "the Boss", the "Master".

Without touching them Jesus told them:

(Luke 17:14 KJV) "Go show yourselves unto the priests."

The Bible tells us that these people, when they headed to the priest, were cleansed. Their leprosy was gone. **All ten were healed**. But only *one of the now healed lepers* came back to Jesus, and fell

on his face, worshiping Jesus and glorifying God. That man, once lost, outcast, hated for the disease that was in him, **lay on the Lord's feet, clutching these precious feet that one day would have nails** driven through them. The Bible doesn't say that this man *just thanked* Jesus. No, the Holy Writ says:

(Luke 17:15 KJV) "... and with a loud voice glorified God, {16} And fell down on *his* face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan."

This **leper surrendered himself to God**. He raised his voice in praise to God in Christ. What hath Christ wrought in us who believe? We have been saved from eternal damnation. We have been saved from a **lake that burneth** with fire forever. We have been saved from the leprosy of this life, and elevated into the family of God. How dare we not praise God with our voices? How dare we not raise our hands in praise to Him? How dare we not kneel before Him, thanking Him for all that He has done?

When is the last time you've surrendered yourself to God? **God surrendered Himself to us**. God the Father surrendered Jesus to us, and Jesus

surrendered Himself to the Cross. There is *power* in imitating God. **The devil wants us to shun and shirk loving God,** to give God the *crumbs* of our lives, the *leftovers*, the *least part*. But God gave us the *best part* of Himself! How dare we withhold the smallest act of worship from Him?

I want you to notice the question that Jesus asks the leper who returned to praise God. Jesus Christ looked at Him and said:

Luke 17:17-19 KJV) "... were there not ten cleansed? but **where are the nine? {18} There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. {19} And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole."**

I want you to think about the last thing Jesus said. He said, "**thy faith hath made thee whole**". My Bible tells me that the other nine were *already healed* of leprosy - why did Jesus say to this man, "**thy faith hath made thee whole**"? Because the ***physical healing was the least that was done that day***. When that **person returned to glorify God**, he was, like the other nine, already healed of leprosy. **What Christ healed when he knelt at His precious feet was his soul**. The outside was cleaned, but the faith that the leper showed in Christ healed his

inside. Nine lepers were saved to go back to their families, but only *one leper* was saved to go to Eternal Life with our Great God.

It is sad to me that, in this day and age, we who profess Christ will imitate all manner of things. **We imitate high fashion.** We wear designer shirts. We wear "Tommy Hilfiger" branded clothes. The Christian, if you are a Christian, should not be hesitant to walk in love. We **should not be hesitant to surrender ourselves to Christ**, just as He surrendered Himself to us. **Why will we not walk down the aisle and meet our Groom as His Bride, chaste and white, prepared for the wedding?** My Beloved, do not allow past indiscretions nor ideas of pride keep you from total and absolute surrender to Jesus! Christ our Savior surrendered Himself to us. Our text says:

[He] hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor

Just as Isaac willingly followed his father Abraham to the top of the mountain to lay down his life (**Genesis 22:2-6**), Jesus willingly followed the will of His Father to that old Rugged Cross. He surrendered Himself to the nails, to the suffering, to death itself – so that we could be

blessed with eternal life.

2. If We Are Children, We Must Not Surrender To Worldly Standards of Love

Ephesians 5:3-4 (KJV) “But fornication^a, and all uncleanness^b, or covetousness^c, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; {4} Neither filthiness^d, nor foolish talking, nor jesting^e, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.”

I remember the time, when I was young, that television and print media were – if not necessarily Biblical – they were moral. There was a **time when television showed God's design**. Two people of the opposite sex met, fell in love, then married. People of the same sex were friends – no more or no less than that. Those were the days!

We live in a day where television and the movies have **so perverted human thought**, even among Christians, that we seem to be **sympathetic** to what the **Bible calls "works of the flesh"**. Works of the flesh are **deeds that are done outside of the blessing of God**. When the modern preacher speaks against these things, many stand up and cry "foul" or "intolerant". Sadly, many local Churches have added their voices to the babel of

confusion that endorses works of the flesh.

Just as we have studied in our *Dispensationalism and Covenants* studies, **any action becomes sinful if it is forbidden by God**. Those things which are listed now are **exceedingly sinful** because they **originate in selfishness**. Those who commit these sins do not imitate God, who made Adam, then formed Eve of his rib. If we walk in love and imitate God then we will, as the Scripture says,

Colossians 3:1-2 (KJV) "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. {2} Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."

In ancient Israel the Mosaic Law specified that *anyone* who touched a *dead body* was unclean for seven days (**Numbers 19:16 KJV**). The anointed of God, His chosen people, are set apart by God to serve *life*, not death. **God wanted the living Israelite to keep themselves apart from the dead**, lest disease be brought into the city of God. Even so the Christian is forbidden to lower himself down to the level of the spiritually dead non-Christian. We are commanded to avoid the works of darkness: **fornication**, that is, sexual contact

outside of marriage. ^bUncleanness, akatharsia {pronounced ak-ath-ar-see'-ah}, a word used to describe homosexual behavior, is also to be avoided. God uses this same word in Romans:

(Romans 1:24 KJV) "Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness^b through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves:"

Unbelievers may resort to uncleanness and evil unnatural relationships between one another, but the Christian is forbidden to lower himself into that pit. Many local Churches have went the way of Balaam,

(2 Peter 2:15 KJV) "Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;"

condoning inappropriate relationships, lowering the glory of God into the dust of evil. God will not hold us faultless if we fail to uphold God's standards as He has decreed them.

There are other things that we must avoid as Christians. Covetousness^c, pleonexia {pronounced pleh-on-ex-ee'-ah}, or greediness. Filthiness^d,

aischrotes {pronounced ahee-skhot'-ace} or *obsenities*, should not come out of our mouths. We should avoid *filthy jokes*, eutrapelia^e {pronounced yoo-trap-el-ee'-ah}. In short, as Christians we must remember that we represent Jesus Christ our Lord. We may not be perfect, but we should make every effort to avoid sinful defilement. As God gives us strength, and as we grow in our knowledge of Him through the disciplines of Bible study and prayer, we shall leave these things alone.

Fornication, homosexuality, filthy talk, course jokes, words that are not befitting the Children of God – these things are divisive, and must be shunned by the Christian. We do not *bash* or *castigate* those who have fallen to such evil, but we do *recognize it as evil* and a thing apart from the expressed will of our Father. When Jesus saw the woman at the well, He condemned her lifestyle as sinful when He said:

John 4:17-18 (KJV) "... Thou hast well said, I have no husband: {18} For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly."

Yet, in condemning the lifestyle, He offered the

solution in Himself (**John 4:26**). The Lord condemned the sin of the woman taken in adultery when He said:

John 8:11 (KJV) "... Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more."

We condemn the sin, and offer salvation in the Savior. But we never *condone the sin* lest we be condemned with the world! **God will not hold the Christian guiltless who looks the other way and pretends that these things are acceptable.** On the other hand, we are *not called to stone those* who are involved in such behavior. We **do not live in the Dispensation of the Law, but we are in the Dispensation of Grace.** In love we warn others from this behavior, knowing it to be of only temporary self-satisfaction, and knowing that this behavior will, ultimately, lead to the destruction of the vessel that submits to it.

At a recent Valentine's Banquet I was privileged to hear the testimony of **Dr. Dennis Brunet**. This man, now a Christian pastor, grew up abused and rough in the Louisiana Bijou. Dr. Brunet was won to Christ by his wife Rebecca - though she wasn't his wife at the time she led him to the Lord. Dr. Brunet spoke of his early experience with Church and how, when he went to attend services

with Rebecca, he told her: "These people aren't Christians. This person drinks with my dad. And that woman over there, she plays around with the men. And that person, well, we saw him fighting in the bar a few days ago". Rebecca told Dennis that these people were *backslidden*, and that's a word I have used too. Beloved, if you are a Christian, your actions should mirror those of righteousness. You should be walking in love, just as Christ walked in love. **You should be avoiding the works of dead people, the unsaved.** You are now in the light.

3. If We Are Children, We Should Want Our Inheritance

(Ephesians 5:5 KJV) "For this ye know, that no whore monger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God."

There is a **judgment day coming for everyone - even for the *professing Christian*.** If you are a child of God then *you should want an inheritance in Heaven* one day. Certainly all who have accepted Christ as Savior will go to Heaven – but **children of the King should also expect an**

inheritance. The children of the King do not just live in the castle, but they look forward to dukedoms and lands and riches and crowns.

I once had an old gentleman tell me, "I don't work for a crown – I work because the Lord tells me to work". Ah, dear Friend, you little understand what God has in store for us. The Apostle Paul said he worked hard for God so he could earn his crown:

1 Corinthians 9:25 (KJV) "And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible."

Paul rejoiced that a crown waited for him in Heaven:

2 Timothy 4:8 (KJV) "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

The Apostle James promoted and worked for a crown from God:

James 1:12 (KJV) "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he

shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."

and exhorted the Church at Jerusalem to *surrender to God and resistance of worldliness*. Only those who endure temptation will receive that crown of life. The Apostle Peter said:

1 Peter 5:4 (KJV) "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

that we should look forward to the crown of glory. And our Lord Jesus Christ Himself spoke to John the Revelator, warning us:

Revelation 3:11 (KJV) "Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, **that no man take thy crown."**

to hold fast to what we have. Do not do as so many other fallen Christians have done, and surrender your inheritance to the world. For there is coming a Judgment Day for every believer, a **Judgment called the Bema Seat of Christ**. This is not a judgment for salvation. Salvation is by faith alone in Christ alone! This is a judgment, however, to determine reward and crowns – a

report card to determine how your works measured up in this life. The Bible says:

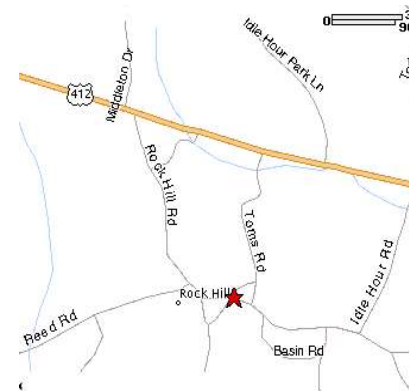
1 Corinthians 3:13-15 (KJV) "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. {14} If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. {15} If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

One day we will all stand before Jesus. Our works will be judged to determine whether they met God's standard of love or not. Did you surrender to Jesus in worship? Did you stand fast against the world and its evil devices? Did your works lead some to Christ, or drive people from His bosom by their bad example?

We have a choice. Every day that starts is a new day where we are free to do for God. If you have accepted Christ as Savior each day is a new day to serve our Master, our Savior, our Groom. If your works have not been surrendered to Christ, you can begin anew from this moment. If you are not a Christian you can surrender your life to Jesus. Believe that He died and rose again for you. Trust

your life to Him. If you are a Christian, you can begin to surrender to God as dear Children. You can live your life for Him. You can do the good works you were designed to do for Him. If you want an inheritance, a reward – your reward – in the next life; if you want a crown that you can lay at His feet – then you must surrender to Him.

May God help each of us to live our lives submitted to Jesus and to our Father. Amen.



Rock Hill Baptist Church is located between Parsons and Lexington, Tennessee, on Highway 412. Look for our sign! We have services on Wednesdays (Adult, Youth, and children's Bible studies) at 7:00 PM, Sundays at 10:00 AM and 6:00 PM. Rock Hill is a family oriented Bible believing Church - Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever! Our Pastor, Brother David Buffaloe, will answer any questions you have about our Church if you contact him at 731-845-6104, or through his website at bibleteacher.org; or e-mail him by writing

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Rock Hill is an independent Church affiliated with the Tennessee Baptist Convention, the Southern Baptist Convention, and is a regular contributor to missions through the Cooperative Program.