

Total Surrender

'Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. See if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.'

Psalm 139:23–24

In making my commitment to follow Jesus, I was unconscious of the nature of total surrender. I often read how St. Paul described himself as a slave of Christ. I understood the metaphor, but sadly missed the point.

A slave surrenders all rights over their life. It's like handing over the keys to my house to a complete stranger. Were I to return, I would find much of my furniture replaced and the house dressed and decorated in an unfamiliar style. My reactions would be of no importance. It would no longer be my house!

So it is with Jesus. We all too readily assume we can co-opt Jesus in some venture of our own imagining. However, not so. All the time I take control of my life, I will run aground upon the rocks of disobedience. The very essence of surrender is to yield to God's purpose alone, a scary concept.

In an age in which we proudly assert human rights, it's no wonder I grow confused when my will diverges from God's will. But who will win out? For many years I assumed God might compromise to the degree I felt I had compromised to serve God.

Sadly, I was mistaken. I have come to discover that many of my woes are the product of my own disobedience. I might try blaming God, but rather the damage I experience is the result of my seeking to resist the irresistible.

Hence, best quietly to surrender, join with the psalmist and invite God's spirit to carry out a full audit of my life, it's aspirations and actions, so that I might identify where the ballast sits. Then I can choose to ditch it and fly, or hang on and be dragged through life complaining about every bump I encounter along the way.

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