



Who Is Your Master?

“Give yourselves completely to God since you have been given new life. And use your whole body as a tool to do what is right for the glory of God.” (Romans 6:13b, NLT)

It had been a fierce battle in the little town of Yorktown, VA, as the Americans fought for their independence from the English. General Cornwallis waited frantically for the fleet of British ships to come with reinforcements. As the ships attempted to come to his rescue, French ships intercepted them. George Washington’s ragtag army charged the last stronghold. In desperation, General Cornwallis ordered his army to escape in boats to the other side of the York River. The soldiers jumped into boats and attempted to escape, but a storm came, sinking the boats. The battle ended. (Can you see God’s hand in this?)

The time came to surrender. The Redcoat army bravely marched to the surrender field and laid down their weapons. But where was their Commander, General Cornwallis? A gentleman would surrender, but pride kept him in his tent. He sent his next in command.

Under new management

Can you relate to Cornwallis? Is there something in your human nature (pride, fear) that causes you to dislike the word “surrender?” Do you connect it to losing in sports, losing a debate or argument? Do you fiercely cling to your “right” to be in control? Would you like someone else to go to the surrender field while you stubbornly sit in your “tent”? In our human nature, everyone probably feels that way. That is not God’s way. **The way to win is to lose.** Jesus explained: *“If you cling to your life (run your own life), you will lose it; but if you give it up for me, you will find it.” (Matthew 10:39, NLT)* When you became a believer, you came under new management. Satan is no longer your master; Jesus is your new Master and Lord! Listen to this warning from him:

So why do you call me “Lord,” when you won’t obey me? I will show you what it’s like when someone comes to me, listens to my teaching, and then obeys me. It is like a person who builds a house on a strong foundation laid upon the underlying rock. When the floodwaters rise and break against the house, it stands firm because it is well built. But anyone who listens and doesn’t obey is like a person who builds a house without a foundation. When the floods sweep down against that house, it will crumble into a heap of ruins. (Luke 6:46-49, NLT)

Defining surrender

Don't think of "Lord" as just a word; it describes your relationship to God. When you call Jesus "Lord," you are acknowledging his total possession of you and your total submission to him as Lord and Master. The Greek words in the New Testament referring to Jesus Christ as Lord are *kurios*, meaning "supreme in authority or controller," and *despotes*, meaning "absolute ruler, like a despot." In Old Testament times, Hebrew slaves were considered family members. They had all rights and fared much better than hired servants did. The Master protected and provided for them, meeting all their needs. In a greater way, did you know the Lord Jesus protects, guides and cares for your needs?

To surrender (yield, submit) is to say, "Lord, I'm totally yours. You can do anything you want with me. Just show me what to do and give me the power to do it." Now imagine that God impresses in your mind to tell a friend about Jesus. **Anything**, Lord! He asks you to help a widow clean her yard instead of going fishing or shopping. **Anytime**, Lord! He moves in your heart to go to Peru on a mission trip. **Anywhere**, Lord! The Apostle Paul put it this way.

And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice – the kind he will accept. When you think of what he has done for you, is it too much to ask? ... Then you will know what God wants you to do." (Romans 12:1, 2b, NLT)

The importance of surrender

Why is unconditional surrender to the Lord Jesus so important? God cannot do what he wants to do in your life as long as you are trying to run it. Think about it. Did you ever try to shampoo a pet when he was struggling to get away? Until you surrender, you will struggle, become frustrated and think the "Christian life doesn't work"! God never intended for you to live the Christian life by your fleshly power. It's impossible! Jesus said, for "*apart from me, you can do nothing.*" (John 15:5b, NLT) Why? Because only Jesus has lived a perfect life! Only Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, can transform you to become like him as he guides, teaches and empowers you to be holy. He is your life!

From a small child you probably could not wait to be old enough to drive a car. Perhaps you would get in the car, play around with the steering wheel, blow the horn, try to move the gears, and pretend you were driving. However, you had no power! How quickly do you think you would learn to drive? How far do you think you would go? Trying to live the Christian life in your own power is like learning to drive a car without ever turning on the ignition and starting the engine! It is a powerless life!

The supreme example

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus gave the supreme example of self-surrender. Facing crucifixion, Jesus prayed, “*Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will, not mine.*” (Luke 22:42, NLT) Surrender (yield, submit) is a one time decision renewed each day as you **die daily** to your desires. You allow Jesus to live his life through you more and more. Paul described a surrendered life this way: “*I have been crucified with Christ. I myself no longer live, but Christ lives in me. So I live my life in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*” (Galatians 2:20, NLT) As you learn to give up your desires and let Jesus lead, your worst enemy will be yourself, your pride. For Cornwallis, surrender was a matter of acting like a gentleman; for you, it is a matter of living a real, abundant life! Why call him “Lord Jesus,” if you don’t obey him?

Attitude:

- Is your attitude one of humility and obedience or rebellion? If you answered, “rebellion,” in what area of your life are you still in charge?

Explore:

- Read “Unconditionally Surrender Your Life” (Romans 12:1-2) and “Live as a Disciple” (in front of the *Student New Testament*.)
- Write in your journal a commitment of surrender

Talking with God:

- Lord, I totally give you my life to be used for your purposes. I know there will be times when I try to take over, but my deepest desire is to obey and bring you honor and glory!