

Surrender

by E.A. Johnston

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Transcript

I've always asked myself the following question. Why is it that some men are so different from other men regarding their usefulness to God? What is it that makes George Whitefield or DL Moody stand out? What do these men have that others do not? We all have the same Bible. We serve the same God.

What's the distinguishing factor in the man God uses? Why are some given deeper usefulness and wider influence over others in their generation? How did they get there? Why is there only a handful of these mighty men in each generation that stand head and shoulders above the adequate or merely commonplace? I was reading the diary of John Song and in it he expressed the same desire that he had recognized in men in former generations. He wrote one time in his diary, in desperation, he wrote, Lord, I don't want to live unless you give me the same spirit of a Finney and a Moody. Well eventually John Song joined the ranks of Finney and Moody as God used him to shake all of China in powerful revival.

But how did he get there? Well that's our subject today, friends. Perhaps there are some of you who long for more in the Christian life. You hunger for wider influence for God and deeper usefulness to Him, but you don't know how to get there.

Wouldn't it be wonderful, friend, if you could have your heart's desire to be a mighty weapon in the hands of a holy God? Well I believe God is looking for someone today that He can depend on. God is not looking for outstanding men, but dependable men. Adrian Rogers shared with me about the time he was preaching in Romania shortly after God brought spiritual revival to that nation which had just been liberated from a cruel communist government.

One of the leaders of that revival was a Romanian pastor who had been beaten and imprisoned for his faith. This man's name was Joseph Tyson. One day Adrian Rogers was riding in a car with Joseph and he asked him to describe the difference between American Christians and Romanian Christians.

At first the man was reluctant. Finally, he answered, Well Adrian, since you asked me, the key word in American Christianity is the word commitment. When you make a commitment, you are still in control.

One can commit to pray, commit to study the Bible, even to witness whatever he chooses to do, he commits to. Americans love commitment because they are still in control. The main difference between an American Christian and a Romanian Christian is the word surrender.

If you hold a gun on someone and ask them to lift their hands in the air as a token of surrender, you don't tell that person what you're committed to. You simply surrender and do as you're told. For a believer, nothing can take the place of absolute surrender to the Lord Jesus.

Well I agree with that assessment friends. I believe a pastor cannot lead his congregation with any true authority and power without being fully surrendered to the Lordship of Christ. And I also believe that God will not use someone in the capacity he wants to use them in until they are fully yielded to his will.

This is where the rubber meets the road. Are you committed or are you surrendered? Are you still in control? Are you willing to give up that control to the Lord Jesus? Well I want to issue a challenge to you friend. How badly do you want further usefulness to God? Are you sick and tired of making vows to God that you can't keep? Are you ready to lift your hands in the air to surrender yourself entirely to God holding nothing back? Christ gave his all on Calvary holding nothing back.

It's time to give it all to him. Get along with God today friend and settle this matter once and for all. You can have as much of the spirit that you want so long as he can have as much of you as he wants.

But for this to occur there must be a surrender to a living Lord. Let us pray.

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