

Sanctification and Surrendering In Our Circumstances

December 10, 2017

- *There must be a healthy balance of both justification and sanctification working in your heart and life.*
- *Justification has already forgiven the sin that sanctification is exposing by chastening.*

THERE IS NO SANCTIFICATION WITHOUT ABSOLUTE AND COMPLETE SURRENDER.

Romans 12:1 ESV

1 **I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present** (*paristēmi* - to place a person or thing at one's disposal, proffer, provide) **your bodies as a living** (*zao* - to live, breathe, be among the living) **sacrifice** (*thysia* - the victim placed on the altar), **holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual** (*logikos* - logical, reasonable, spiritual) **worship.**

"We have seen that the beginning of all sanctification is separation to God, as His entire possession, to be at His disposal...Because He desires to have us entirely for Himself, He has chosen and bought us, and set upon us the distinguishing mark of the blood, as those who are separated from all around them, to live only for His service."

--Andrew Murray, The Power of the Blood of Jesus, Chapter 5

"The experiences of men who walked with God in olden times agree to teach that the Lord cannot fully bless the a man until He has first conquered him. The degree of blessing enjoyed by any man will correspond exactly with the completeness of God's victory over him."

— A.W. Tozer, The Divine Conquest

Matthew 16:24-25 ESV

24 **Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny** (*aparneomai* - to disown, abstain, forget oneself, lose sight of oneself) **himself and take up his cross and follow me.**

25 **For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.**

"They know Christ. They trust Him. They love Him. But He is not Master. He is a sort of helper. When there is trouble, they come to Him. When they sin, they ask Him for pardon in His precious blood. When they are in darkness, they cry to Him. But often and often they live according to their own will and they seek help from themselves. But how blessed is the man who comes and, like Potiphar, says, 'I will give up everything to Jesus.' There are many who have accepted Christ as their Lord but have never yet come to the final absolute surrender of everything."

--Andrew Murray, The Complete Surrender, The Master's Indwelling, Chapter 8

SIGNS OF SURRENDER

In Our Circumstances and Adversities

You are fully surrendered to God when you gratefully embrace the circumstances and adversities of your life, knowing they are ordered by God for your eternal good, to cleanse you of sin and to exercise you in holiness.

James 1:2-4 ESV

2 Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds,

3 for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.

4 And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

- *Will you be a Peter or a Judas Iscariot in your trial?*
- *Whether the trial delivers you or defeats you depends on your response to it.*
- *We greatly multiply our stress when we resent God's chastening and try, in our own efforts and worldly methods, to somehow resist or change our circumstances.*
- *When we surrender to God in our circumstances:*
 - *He is able to set us free from the sin that binds us.*
 - *We are exercised in faith and holiness.*
 - *His grace supernaturally gives us the strength and ability to endure.*

Psalm 37:23 NASB

23 The steps of a man are established by the LORD, And He delights in his way.

Psalm 37:23 NLT (New Living Translation)

23 The LORD directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives.

Psalm 37:23 (The Amplified Bible)

23 The steps of a [good] man are directed and established by the Lord when He delights in his way [and He busies Himself with his every step].

- *Knowing that my circumstances are sovereignly and lovingly designed by my heavenly Father is what gives me the trust and the ability to patiently endure and surrender to God's purposes.*

Job 1:20-21 ESV

20 Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head and fell on the ground and worshiped.

21 And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."

Matthew 10:29-31 ESV

29 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father.

30 But even the hairs of your head are all numbered.

31 Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.

"If there is one single molecule in this universe running around loose, totally free of God's sovereignty, then we have no guarantee that a single promise of God will ever be fulfilled."

--R.C. Sproul, Calvinist Theologian, Author, Pastor

Philippians 2:14-15 ESV

14 **Do all things without grumbling** (*goggysmos - murmuring, muttering, secret displeasure, secret debate*) **or disputing** (*dialogismos - questioning, doubting, disputing, arguing*),

15 **that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world.**

- *If you embrace and submit to God's chastening and the trials which God orchestrates in your life, that is confirmation and proof that you are a child of God, who trusts their heavenly Father.*
- *I believe that every detail of every circumstance of my life is designed by God. To know that is to silence and put to death any self-survival, self-reliance and self-will.*

"God speaks to men in many experiences of life, and not least in those which try their hearts and souls. But we can hear His voice only when we accept in reverence what comes to us. If we accept it with resentment, the rebellious cries of our own heart make us deaf to the voice of God."

--William Barclay, The Letter to the Hebrews, p. 48

"Talk about going from bad to worse. Defiance is the classic illustration. First, defiance begins with carnal attitudes. Long before there are carnal actions, there are carnal attitudes. It can happen to adults just as quickly as it can to teens or kids. Perhaps it would help if I spelled out a few of the attitudes by describing some actual thoughts in the minds of the defiant."

"The first thought says: 'I want my own way.' Those who are defiant aren't interested in your way, or God's way. 'I want my way.' That is an attitude of selfishness."

"The second thought says this: 'I won't quit until I get it.' That is an attitude of stubbornness. 'I want my way, and I want it when I want it. I will not quit until I get it.' That's just plain obstinacy; that's stubbornness."

"Third: 'I don't care who it hurts.' In other words, 'I want my way. I won't quit until I get it, and I don't care who it hurts—husband, wife, peers, parents, kids, the team, my church—I don't care. I'm gonna get my way.' That is an attitude of indifference."

"Fourth: 'I refuse to listen to counsel.' Obviously, that is an attitude of resistance. 'I know God has something to tell me, but I don't want to hear what He's got to say.' Or, 'I know what He's going to tell me—I know what that Book says. I don't want to listen to God's counsel.' That's resistance."

"Fifth, and finally: 'I am not concerned about the consequences.' That's contempt. Pushed to the wall, this extreme reaction includes ignoring the consequences—a total lack of concern for the results."

"'I want my own way. I won't quit until I get it. I don't care who it hurts. I will not listen to counsel. I am not concerned about the consequences.' Those are the words of a defiant person. And they can come from our lips just as readily as from a person without Christ. They

represent selfishness and stubbornness and indifference and resistance and contempt. As I mentioned earlier, defiance begins with carnal attitudes."

"Continuing the downward spiral, the second inescapable reality about defiance is this: Defiance leads to personal misery. The defiant person wants freedom, but he finds himself captured. He wants his own way, but he finds himself ensnared by the restrictions that misery brings."

--Chuck Swindoll, "The Downward Spiral of Defiance", Daily Devotional

Hebrews 12:3-17 ESV

3 Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary (*kamnō* - to grow weary, sick, faint, to tire) or fainthearted (*eklyō* - fainthearted, to faint, enfeebled through exhaustion, grow weak, tired out).

Hebrews 5:8-9 ESV

8 Although He was a son, he learned (*manthanō* - to learn by use and practice) obedience through what he suffered.

9 And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him.

If the perfect and sinless Son of God had to learn obedience by suffering, how much more do we?

Hebrews 12:3-17 ESV

4 In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.

5 And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? "My son, do not regard lightly (*oligōreō* - to care little for, make small account, despise, disesteem) the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary (*eklyō* - fainthearted, to faint, enfeebled through exhaustion, grow weak, tired out) when reproved by him.

Are you listening to God speaking to you in the exercise of His chastening?

Hebrews 12:3-17 ESV

6 For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives."

- God's chastening is not just for Christians who "behave badly." I won't have less chastening if I "clean up" my behavior.
- Having problems in life are not a sign of a rebellious or problematic child of God.
- God chastens every child. His chastening is His love for that child, for the good of the child. It is the life-long process of sanctification at work.
- Who, how and when God chastens His child is entirely God's sovereign prerogative, and we are unable to comprehend His purposes and plan.

Hebrews 12:3-17 ESV

7 It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline?

- *We patiently and gladly endure the discipline because it is setting us free from the sin that “clings so closely to us.”*
- *We want the discipline. The discipline is well worth enduring!*

Hebrews 12:3-17 ESV

8 If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.

9 Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live?

10 For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness.

11 All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained (*gymnazō - exercise vigorously*) by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

Hebrews 5:14 NASB

14 But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained (*gymnazō - exercise vigorously*) to discern good and evil.

- *“Gymnazo” comes from the Greek “gymnasion” which in ancient times was a training facility for athletes entering the public games or olympics.*
- *The patience, the endurance, the steadfastness of James 1 becomes critical. An olympic athlete may fail 100 times before getting it right. Then after his first success, he will try 1,000 more times to perfect it.*

Hebrews 12:3-17 ESV

12 Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees,

- *Never quit in the process of sanctification. When others give up on you, when you give up on yourself, never give up on God, because He never gives up you.*
- *The Holy Spirit is addressing your spiritual condition, not your physical condition. The stress compounds and the fatigue multiplies trying to resist God’s chastening.*

Hebrews 12:3-17 ESV

13 and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed.

14 Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.

15 See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no "root of bitterness" springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled;

- *As God the Husbandman, prunes from heart and life the affections for sin, don’t become anxious, resentful, resistant or bitter towards the training of chastening.*
- *Just like the olympic athlete, the child of God in training doesn’t quit after 100 or 1,000 failures.*

Hebrews 12:3-17 ESV

16 that no one is sexually immoral or unholy like Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal.

- *In the discomfort of the chastening, we often seek to pacify or relieve our pain by indulging our flesh, which never helps but only complicates and intensifies the problems even more.*
- *In the flesh, we develop our own coping mechanisms and carnal escapes, which can destroy us.*

Hebrews 12:3-17 ESV

17 For you know that afterward, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no chance to repent, though he sought it with tears.