**Message/Testimony, January 2023**

**By Michelle Woodburn**

**Audio recording: https://fccdl.in/ALSi2e7kmp?st=215**

Tonight, I want to first recite to you the lyrics of a popular hymn titled
*I Surrender All*. I’m sure many of you are familiar with this tune and will recognize it.

All to Jesus I surrender
All to Him I freely give
I will ever love and trust Him
In His presence daily live

I surrender all
I surrender all
All to Thee
My blessed Savior
I surrender all

All to Jesus I surrender
Make me, Savior, wholly Thine
Let me feel Thy Holy Spirit
Truly knowing Thou art mine

I surrender all
I surrender all
All to Thee
My blessed Savior
I surrender all

All to Jesus I surrender
Now I feel the sacred flame
Oh the joy of full salvation
Glory, glory to his name

I surrender all
Oh, I surrender all
All to Thee
My blessed Savior
I surrender all

So, tonight, I ask you, Saints, have you surrendered your all to God? Are you totally sold out to Jesus? Does your life completely belong to the Master?

The title of tonight's message is, "Have ***You*** Surrendered All?"

Jesus surrendered his all to his Heavenly Father. During his lifetime he only did the will of God because he was completely sold out to Him.

In John 6:38 Jesus says, "For I have come down from heaven not to do ***my*** will but to do the will of Him who sent me."

After Jesus fasted 40 days and 40 nights, Satan took him up to a very high mountain to show him all the kingdoms of the world and its splendor. Satan said to Jesus, “All this I will give you if you will bow down and worship me.” Jesus, said to Satan, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: *Worship the Lord your God, and* ***serve Him only***.” We are to do as Jesus did and only worship and **serve** the Almighty Living God, Creator of all.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus was sorrowful and troubled as he pleaded with his Father in prayer not to send him to the cross. Jesus said, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death." Yet Jesus surrendered his will to God and told Him, "Not my will, Father, but thine will be done." Mt. 26:39

If Jesus surrendered his will to the Father, then shouldn't we do the same as he? After all, isn't our goal to be Christ-like?

Mt. 16:24 says, "If anyone would come after me, let him ***deny himself*** and take up his cross and follow me." To deny one's self means to surrender one's self.

Let's look at what surrendering to God means. It means letting go of your plans, and letting God have His way in every aspect of your life. It means allowing God to guide your steps and direct your paths as you surrender your will to His and follow Him.

But what if surrendering your all to God meant not having the life you dreamed of having? Suppose you dreamed of having a successful lucrative career; being happily married; having a family; owning a home; traveling the world; being a prominent community leader; having a robust social life. Would you be willing to surrender your desires and goals for God's perfect will for your life? Or would you choose your own path?

Suppose God told you that He could effectively minister to more people through you if you forfeited your dreams? Could you surrender to His perfect will for your life? Would you surrender?

After all, Jesus tells us in Matthew 10:39 that "Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it."

As I lay bed-ridden with sciatica and spinal stenosis, unable to stand up (let alone walk), I have plenty of time to reflect upon my life. I've asked myself the questions I posed to you, and I've also asked myself, would I be willing to remain afflicted if God asked me to? Would I be willing to forfeit my hope of total healing, my dream of walking again, and my desire for independence in order to more positively impact the lives of others? What if my life is more useful to God in my present afflicted state than my desired healed state? There are countless numbers of people with disabilities who God uses to His Glory, every day. Afterall, the Bible says that God chooses the weak to confound the mighty.

1 Corinthians 1:27-29 AMP says
But God has selected [for His purpose] the **foolish** things of the world to shame the wise [revealing their ignorance], and God has selected [for His purpose] the **weak** things of the world to shame the things which are strong [revealing their frailty]. God has selected [for His purpose] the **insignificant (base)** things of the world, and the things that are **despised** and **treated with contempt**, [even] the things that are **nothing**, so that He might reduce to nothing the things that are, so that no one may [be able to] boast in the presence of God.

So, I ask myself, is it God’s will that I be one of *these* chosen vessels? Does God want to use me in my afflicted state to confound the worldly, wise, and strong? Could I do it for God? Would I?

Colossians 1:16 says, "All things were created by Him and ***for*** Him." Thus, God created us for Himself. He created us for ***His purpose***, not our own. We are not our own because we belong to God.

Isaiah 43:7 says that God created every one of us for ***His glory***. Our lives should glorify God. That's why he made us.

God says in Revelation 4:11 that He created all things for ***His pleasure***. Our lives should please God.

We are not our own, but God's. He created us for ***His purpose, His glory*** and ***His pleasure.***
2 Corinthians 5:15 says, "And he died for all, that those who live ***should no longer live for themselves*** but for him who died for them and was raised again."

In life, you have to be willing to be like Jesus and say to God, "not my will but Yours Father."

You have to be willing to surrender your all and submit your will to God.

I want to close with a prayer. Lord, please order our steps and direct our paths. Help us to surrender to You and make Your will our will. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.