

Unconditional Surrender

(scriptures from *NKJV*)

“...Man shall not live by bread alone, but **BY EVERY WORD** of God.” (Luke 4:4)

“But on this one will I look: On him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who **TREMbles** at My word.” (Isa. 66:2)

“...**NOT my** will, but **THINE**, be done.” (Luke 22:42 *KJV*; cf. Phil. 2:5)

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a **LIVING SACRIFICE**, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service.” (Rom. 12:1)

“...bringing **EVERY THOUGHT** into captivity to the obedience of Christ.” (II Cor. 10:5)

“...whoever of you does not forsake **ALL** that he has **cannot BE** My disciple.” (Luke 14:33)

“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You **CANNOT** serve God and mammon... But **SEEK FIRST the kingdom of God and His righteousness...**” (Matt. 6: 24, 33)

“Set your mind on things above, **NOT** on things on the earth. For you **DIED**, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When **Christ *who IS our life*** appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.” (Col. 3: 2-4)

“Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you... **YOU ARE NOT YOUR OWN**; you were **BOUGHT** with a price...” (I Cor. 6:19-20, *NRSV*)

“Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore **we were buried with Him through baptism into death**, that **just as Christ was raised from the dead** by the glory of the Father, **even so we also should walk in newness of life**. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness* of His resurrection, knowing this, that our **old man was crucified with Him**, that the body of sin might be done away with, **that we should no longer be slaves of sin**” (Rom. 6: 3-6).

“Meditate on these things; give yourself **ENTIRELY** to them...” (I Tim. 4: 15)

“Let us hear **the conclusion of the whole matter**: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the **WHOLE DUTY** of man.” (Eccl. 12:13 *KJV*)

“...the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells **ALL** that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven

is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of **great price**, went and sold **ALL** that he had and bought it.” (Matt. 13: 44-46)

“For if, after they have **escaped** the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are **again** entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. For it would have been better for them not to have **known** the way of righteousness, than **having** known *it*, to turn **from** the holy commandment delivered to them. But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: “**A dog returns to his own vomit,**” and, “a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire.” (II Peter 2: 20-22)

“...These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: ‘**I know** your works, that you are **neither cold nor hot**. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, **because you are lukewarm**, and neither cold nor hot, **I will VOMIT you out of My mouth**... As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore **be zealous and repent**.’” (Rev. 3: 14-19)

Also see article below:

“Do Not ‘Kid’ Yourself!”

Roderick C. Meredith, *Living Church News*
[November/December 2008](#)

Remember Jesus Christ’s own direct warning: “Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. *I did not come to bring peace but a sword*. For I have come to ‘set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law’; and ‘a man’s enemies will be those of his own household’” (Matthew 10:34–36).

Also, Christ warns us that Satan, the “accuser,” will soon be cast down to this earth, “having **great wrath**, because he knows that he has a short time” (Revelation 12:10–12). At that point, probably in the *next several years*, Satan will **strike** at the true Church of God that is *directly preparing* its members to be kings and priests who will *replace* Satan and his demons in ruling this world. Yes, Satan knows *who* we are and *where* we live!

So, we *cannot afford* to be anywhere but in the very “center” of God’s will. We *must* be truly close to God to have *His divine protection*—and to have the spiritual *strength of character* to go through whatever trials and persecutions God may allow to come—*even on us*. For we will soon be **tested** by “fiery” trials such as have **never** descended upon us before! As Peter was inspired to tell us, “Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy” (1 Peter 4:12–13).

Are **you** genuinely “ready?”

Are **you**—in your daily life—developing the *strength of character* to go through these trials with **faith** and with the love of God?

For your sake, please do **not** “kid” yourself! “For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?” (1 Peter 4:17).

So, *think carefully!*

In *your* daily life, do you often “cut corners”—so to speak—by only praying for a few minutes? Do you fail, sometimes for days at a time, to really **study** the Bible? Do you only **fast** once or twice in *an entire year*?

Also, when you are not really close to God, do you find yourself drifting into “worldly” attitudes and thinking *vain* thoughts, *lustful* thoughts, **hateful** thoughts—thoughts you would be ashamed to have God know about? Of course, He *does* know about them! In your conduct throughout the day—including the very *way you use your time*—do you indicate by your **actions** that God’s Kingdom is absolutely “first” in your life? Or does God seem “way off,” such that instead of drawing closer to your brethren and your Savior, you find yourself *criticizing* and *judging* your fellow Church members, and even God’s true ministers at times? And do you then find yourself feeling **bitter** against others, or “letting down” in *many other ways* from the standards of Jesus Christ—perhaps drifting into drinking too much, smoking, lying, cursing or cheating in various matters?

Be honest!

Brethren, if we are to survive the coming trials, tests and persecutions, we simply must be **filled with** and **led by** God’s Holy Spirit! For our daily actions—the “fruits” of our lives—reveal whether or not we are spiritually strong, and whether we are up to facing the enormous challenges and trials just ahead. Godly character *cannot* be instantly created or granted by fiat. It must be carefully developed by each of us, over a period of time. Character is that moral or spiritual force within which impels one to integrity. *True character* is exercising the power of the Holy Spirit so that we resist the wrong thoughts and actions and, on the contrary, determine with all our heart—through prayer and study and conscious effort—to **do** the “right thing” in everything we think and say and do.

Therefore, asking **God** for His extra help and guidance through His Spirit, we must nevertheless *drive ourselves* to develop godly habits, consciously make godly choices, and always be sure that we constantly think godly thoughts. Otherwise, wrong thoughts will *pull us down*. Remember, sin begins in the **mind**—not in some part of the body. That is why we are told to bring “every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:5). It must begin in the *mind*. And then we must carefully determine to *develop those habits* of humble Bible **study**, heartfelt **prayer**, *meditation* and regular **fasting** so that we may truly be “drinking in” of the mind and character of God on a regular basis. Otherwise, the attitudes of self and Satan—which are

literally *swirling around us* in this sin-filled world—will predominate in our thoughts and actions!

Certainly, as so many Protestants would be quick to tell us, we are not “saved” by consciously doing good. However, what the Protestants really misunderstand is that we are *justified*—forgiven our past sins—through the sacrifice of Christ. Then, through **Christ in us**, we are ultimately saved by consciously yielding ourselves to **let Him live in us!**

Speaking of Christ, Paul tells us that we have been “justified” by His blood. Yet he continues, “Much more, having been reconciled, *we shall be saved by His life*” (Romans 5:9–10).

How so? By the very process described in my favorite verse in the Bible: “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, *but Christ liveth in me*: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20, *KJV*). So, although it is “Christ in you” who gives you the strength and power to be ultimately “saved”—that is, to be given *eternal life* in the Kingdom of God—you still have *your part* to do in consciously going to God and to Christ, for the needed help and strength without which you would **never** make it! As the Apostle Paul stated, “Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation with fear and trembling**; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure” (Philippians 2:12–13).

Dear brethren, as you think of the terrifying times just ahead, I exhort you and implore you with all my heart to *go all out* to build those **right habits** of diligently **studying** your Bible, *praying fervently, meditating, fasting* and then **exercising** the Holy Spirit in everything you think, say and do. By building those habits as a daily **way of life**, by consciously choosing—again and again—to do **the right thing**, you will be developing the *character* to *obey* and to **trust** in God to help you through the terrible times ahead. *Only* in this way—through Christ **really** living within you—will you make it into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Please do **not** “kid” yourself into thinking that just because you keep the Sabbath, attend Sabbath services and have Church friends, you are somehow guaranteed entrance into God’s Kingdom. Do you *really* think God will let weak, vacillating, compromising individuals into the very *family of God*—to share the awesome *glory* and **power** of the divine family?

No way!

Each of us *must realize* that *only* by going through the crucible of *profound repentance* and the continuing *emptying of self*, going *faithfully* through fiery trials, *truly* learning to “walk with God,” and—along with *all* true saints—learning to “**cry out** day and night to Him” (Luke 18:7)—*only in this way* can we be certain of living forever in the glorious Kingdom of God! Then, *if* we really *go all out* in seeking and serving our heavenly Father, He has promised to give us the needed help through His Holy Spirit. And, He will *never* give up on us. “For He Himself has said, ‘I will **never** leave you nor forsake you’” (Hebrews 13:5).