

I Surrender – December 11th 2022

Good morning, Church! My name is Martin Gunter and I am the Adult Ministry Pastor here at Southland, today we are going to talk about Surrender!

A. What is surrender? Surrender means. Its to yield (something) to the possession or power of another. What struck me almost immediately is that this is not the definition I thought it was... Let me explain, I assumed when someone tells me to surrender, the very first thing that pops into my mind is a guy walking with a white flag saying I surrender, and then giving himself up to someone else, and Interestingly enough in the bible we actually do not see a ton a passages that specifically talk about Surrender, but what we do see are so MANY, MANY stories and parables and themes that talk about Surrender and how we can do that. There is actually an overwhelming amount of different examples and I believe that its God's grace to help us understand this topic a lot better, and best of all, we have like the BEST example in Surrender. Any ideas who in the whole bible modeled Surrender the most??? JESUS!!! So its no wonder we are all called to humble ourselves and deny ourselves to follow Him! But from all the passages, I think a good introduction to surrender is found in Luke and it gives us a foundation on where we can start building on specifically on **how often** and **what** I need to surrender... Look at what it says: *Luke 9:23-26 Then he said to them all: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.* OK, already here we can see that this is not a one time deal, like I said earlier, surrender is something we do daily in our Christian walk with Him! So to answer the question on how often, this is daily! Lets continue... *24 For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. 25 What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self?* So we know its daily, now what are we surrendering daily? Our lives!! Surrender is not just a part of us, and I don't know about you guys, but I want to save my life, and you have to love how God works, If I want to save it, I have to surrender it over! That's how God's economy works and we see Jesus demonstrated that to us over and over again and ultimately He did that on the cross for us! So reading passages like this we can see its not a one time deal and it certainly requires action through a process of continuously surrendering to Him. Let me explain it to you in another way.

So its no secret that I am not from Canada, I mean if someone took a picture of me, you will not be able to tell that I am from Africa, but when I open my mouth, you can hear that I am not from Manitoba and in my mannerisms you can tell I was not raised here. So when I came to Canada, I was a South African citizen, I had to go through a process of LOTS of paperwork, and eventually become a Canadian citizen, and I had to surrender my South African citizenship over to become a Canadian citizen. This was not a process where I said, OK, I surrender, I give up and then continue to do nothing or continue to do things I am accustomed to or raised to do... Now please understand, this was not this unbearable burden I was carrying, that every morning I got up I had to surrender to the culture here, NO... I chose to move here, and I am excited to surrender... WHY? because I know what I am surrendering to.... I am surrendering to a culture I chose to be a part of, and a country and community I love dearly because look at all you amazing people out here, who would not want to be here with such amazing people! I gladly surrender, because I know what I am surrendering to.... which brings me to a question then....

B. Do you know what you are surrendering to? I think this is one of the biggest hindrances we have because we do not know what we are surrendering to in our lives.... See its easier to surrender if we know what we are surrendering to, but I think we forget WHO it is we are surrendering to and then we start asking ourselves.... Why surrender... Life is so good, why would I surrender.... What I have because I am in control, and we LOVE control right!! Control is wonderful, because now I can dictate what should happen next. But sometimes we say, I am not controlling, I just know what you should be doing right now and we we lose that control it can be scary to us! Surrender can be scary because we have to let go and give that control to someone else and trust Him with it! In the end, we will all surrender to something, whether its our phones, money, ourselves or God, the choice is yours in whom you will serve.... Lets take this from a different angle, let me ask you a question.... And its not a trick question, I promise.....

What does this world need the most??? JESUS.... What does our schools need most?? JESUS... What does our businesses need most?? JESUS.... AND YOU ARE RIGHT....Now here lies the problem, **if I do not surrender and keep that control to myself, all I can give the world is me, and that is not what this world needs because I am not enough!!** If this world needs Jesus, I have to surrender so that I can give Jesus to the world! But if we do not surrender, we will only hear our own mortal or temporary truth that cannot pierce through my flesh into my spirit.

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. Its no longer I who live, but Christ that lives in me!! If this world truly needs Jesus, Church, we are the only ones who can give it to them, but we have to surrender! Now, I get its easy for me to stand here and say go and surrender! Its HARD to do... But we have an example that we can follow and imitate on how we are suppose to surrender, even if its hard! So lets look at a passage where we can see Jesus practice surrender in hard circumstances!*Mark 14:32-36 And they went to a place called Gethsemane. And he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." 33 And he took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly distressed and troubled. 34 And he said to them, "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death. Remain here and watch." 35 And going a little farther, he fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. 36 And he said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."* Jesus was greatly distressed and troubled! Jesus said, my soul is very sorrowful, even to death! He praised the Father and then asked, Yet not what I will, but what you will!! Jesus surrenders to the Father over and over again and in one of His most difficult places, Jesus keeps on surrendering! Again in *Philippians 2:8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.* Jesus is the very example to us for how we need to surrender over, and lets be honest, Jesus had it more together than anyone in here, and He still surrenders His will to the Father, so why are we not doing it?? But I get it, maybe Jesus bar is a bit high and we cannot relate, so lets use another example in scripture, we can even go all the way back to the Old Testament and let me tell you how I got there....

1 Samuel 1:6-11a Because the Lord had closed Hannah's womb, her rival kept provoking her in order to irritate her. 7 This went on year after year. Whenever Hannah went up to the house of the Lord, her rival provoked her till she wept and would not eat. 8 Her husband Elkanah would say to her, "Hannah, why are you weeping? Why don't you eat? Why are you downhearted? Don't I mean more to you than ten sons?" 9 Once when they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh,

Hannah stood up. Now Eli the priest was sitting on his chair by the doorpost of the Lord's house. ¹⁰ In her deep anguish Hannah prayed to the Lord, weeping bitterly. ¹¹ And she made a vow, saying, "Lord Almighty, if you will only look on your servant's misery and remember me, and not forget your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the Lord for all the days of his life, What was Hannah thinking, she finally got the one thing she was after and then she gave it up?? What's that all about?? This is surrender Church!!! But this does not make sense, the one thing that caused her deep anguish and weeping bitterly she does give back to God?? Why See she gained the Lord! She was no longer consumed about the miracle she received, instead she found the miracle giver!!! I believe that she found the Lord through all her suffering, and not just a son.... This was no longer her desire of what she wants, but this is to glorify the Lord!! How do I know this.... Look at *1 Samuel 2:1-2 Then Hannah prayed and said: "My heart rejoices in the Lord; in the Lord my horn is lifted high. My mouth boasts over my enemies, for I delight in your deliverance. 2 "There is no one holy like the Lord; there is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God.* Hannah knew WHO she was surrendering to!! Do you see the steps from being in anguish, distressed and troubled and taking that moving into prayer and then surrendering it to the Lord! Hannah was an incredible woman who understood this principle that its not about me, but returning it all back to the Father, because He is the ultimate gift! We serve a good God amen! Once we understand that we are surrendering to Him, it makes surrender so much easier!!

C. How do I surrender? Well, you might say, OK, Ill surrender, but what does that look like? How do I surrender?? I already touched on it here with Jesus and Hannah, so lets see what Jesus did since He is our ultimate example of surrender: *John 5:30 Jesus said: By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me.* So first off, we see that Jesus does nothing without the Father! We need to be seeking the Fathers heart in Surrendering, and make Jesus the Functional Lord of our lives! But how do we do that?

- 1) **We Pray**, so we can do what the Father asks to do. Let me show you: It says in *Luke 5:16 But Jesus Himself would often slip away to the wilderness and pray.* Prayer is where we start!!! With the enemy when it comes to prayer, he will do everything in his power to keep you from praying, because he knows the power it holds! Because prayer goes where I cannot go and our prayers will do far more than we can here in our flesh He knows by praying we are surrendering our will to His will, and the more we pray and surrender now its God who starts working more on it through me, because we are crucifying our flesh so our Spirit can we become more active. The enemy will use any distraction to keep you from praying, he is a cunning foe, and nothing is beneath him to get your attention somewhere else. DO not make the same mistake, use the mighty weapons that God gave you! PRAY!! *John 15:5 No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.* See when we pray and we seek Jesus, he tells us what to do next because He calls us his friends, no longer are we walking in darkness, but we know what to do next because we are connected to the vine. But what if we feel that my prayers are just not getting through, its like they are

bouncing off the walls but not bouncing to God, then maybe there is something that you need to confess...

- 2) **Confess:** We live in a sinful world and we still sin, and when we do, we bring that to the Lord and it's a great posture of surrendering before him! Not only does this allow us to communicate better in our prayers with Him, it's taking responsibility for what I have done. Confession is simply when I have Sin in my life, I am rebelling against God, I am walking away from Him, and no longer surrendered to Him, so this is a vital weapon we have at our disposal to use against the enemy. This is also something we go into in much greater depth at our Set Free and Cell Groups here in the church so if this is an area you are struggling with a habitual sin, or addiction, please do not feel shame full... We have all sinned and fallen short of the Glory of God, so please come talk to us or sign up for a Set Free where we can help you systematically go through the process. **Acts 3:19 Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.** Which brings us to our next point, #3. After we confess our sins, we have experienced that weight that falls off from us and we can much more freely worship and exalt Him!
- 3) **Exalt Him:** To exalt God is to raise God to the highest place in our lives. To give Him first place in every thought in our mind, every word spoken, and every deed done. This is a step that is easily missed, but remember Hannah in 1 Sam 2? Looked how she responded, and look at Jesus at Gethsemane, both turned to exalt the Lord despite of the situation they were in, actually I would say when we face our trails or the dark night of the soul, those are the best times to surrender over and exalt Him. **Psalm 63:3-4 Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you. I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name I will lift up my hands.** I surrender my life to You Lord, because Your love is better!! We can exalt God in so many ways in our lives, its actually in all our ways. We can do it though song, by worshipping Him, we can do it by deed by taking care of those around us and loving them with His love. We can exalt him with our time, by spending time in His presence, and we can exalt Him with our minds, by surrendering over our will to complete His will for our lives.... But all of these have one thing in common, they require action... So
- 4) **Take Action:** **James 1:22** You got to love how direct James is.... **Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.** Do what it says, this takes action on our part!! Ill give you an example from my life.... When I started my Christian journey again in 2004, it started with prayer! I asked the Lord into my heart and then as you know found this church and then joined a small group. This is where I learned to pray more intentionally and eventually went to a Set Free to start dealing with surrendering my sins and addictions over to the Lord. Again, this was not a one time deal, but with accountability and that daily picking up my cross and crucifying my flesh. Now in response to dealing with my sin and addictions I found myself Exalting the Father more and more, in my speech, in the worship services here and in the young adult days at the worship events we had there! So, I came to a point of asking the Lord, OK, what's next, and he told me Anime, and after that was Video Games. At first I was thinking really Lord, but that's so much FUN, and what else will I do now??? But I realized that they where both an entry point in my life for sin and addiction and the less I played, the more

I surrendered that over to Him, the more my spiritual life started to grow.... So do I miss anime and video games, not really... And just so you know.... This was for a season where I had to cut it away completely because I was addicted to it and much more... But today, we have a console at home, we got one for our kids, and I was actually afraid I would just run back to it, you know how 2 Pet 2:22 talks about the pig running back to the mud. I was afraid I would do that, but because I surrender it to God, I actually found that when we got it, I had no desire to really play by myself... I love playing with my kids, and the odd time I play, after 30mins or so I am done... But these steps of Pray, Confess, Exalt Him and Take action really never stopped and to this day I still ask Him, what should I surrender next?? It's a continual surrendering my life!! These 4 steps are simple, but what about things I cannot change? What then? This is so HARD, but we are called to...

- D. Surrender what I cannot change:** *Proverbs 3:5-6 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways submit to him, and he will make straight your paths.* IN All our ways submit to Him!! Sometimes we do not understand why something is happening, especially when its hard and close to our hearts! but we need to put our trust in Him, and look at what He promises, He will make straight your paths!! What a promise eh! Maybe you hit something in your life where you cannot change anything... You literally cannot do anything.... Then we need a miracle right! Now before we move on, CAVIAT time.... let me say that I am not against miracles, I LIKE MIRACLES! I have witnessed many miracles, I am a miracle walking here, and it's a miracle that I am speaking to you today in so many ways and **to God be all the honor and glory that its possible this morning.** I want to remind you of Hannah in how she found God instead of the Miracle... I want to tell you the story of a man in our church who has given me permission to share this story, but would like to remain anonymous, so to stick with tradition we shall name him Bob! And he is not related or the same as the other Bob in my previous message... At the start of this story Bob was newly married, moved into the area and had an accident that put him in a wheel chair. This was devastating and hard to deal with, but they held onto Jesus and at Prayer Summits they would ask for prayer, ask for healing, a miracle! One morning Bob got up, prayed about healing again, and seeking the Lord in it and wondering why is this not happening to me, where is my miracle... But this one day in prayer, and again, that's the key to all this, God asked him a question... You know what it was??? **What if I want to see you face to face when I tell you to stand and walk? You will be whole again, but for now, you will glorify my Name by being in that chair!** Hearing Bob and his wife tell me this story you can see the conviction in his eyes and he added, though I am physically weak now, I have become spiritually strong.... I have matured and no longer like a child do I ask why cant I have this now.... Bob found God in a whole different way, and no longer is he chasing the miracle, but the miracle giver, his Provider, Jehovah Jireh! Bob is still in a wheel chair today, but no longer bound to it, he told me when they go to the pool for example, he realized that he can no longer swim with his kids like he used to, but in surrendering that over, he found other ways he can enjoy the poll time with them instead of allowing the enemy to turn it into bitterness... So, if I might be so bold to say, what has happened to Bob is a miracle! Its supernatural for a man to be so contagious with his joy in the Lord, and resting in Jesus peace, that brings glory to His name IF we are willing to surrender. And Bob is not alone, there are many of you in here that over

overcome much hardship and continue to persevere through incredibly tough situations, not because of your own strength, but because you have surrendered to Him and now you are pursuing the miracle giver, instead of the miracle itself, and I wanted to say, do not be disheartened! For those of you who struggle with infertility, or a child struggling with health issues, or a loved one who is no longer following the Lord, I encourage you to PRAY! Persevere and continue to surrender to Him because in this manner we are partnering up with Jesus and He will grant your hearts greatest desires!! Trusting God more than the miracle! And like Bob said, even though my flesh is weak, my Spirit is stronger than ever! Church, that takes unconditional surrender!

Lets wrap it up.... What will it take to bring you to unconditional surrender to Jesus? What will it take? Ill give you an example, now I cant remember where I heard this story, but I think its appropriate for this area we live in... One day there was a chicken and a pig walking down the street, and they saw a sign in a store saying, URGENT! Bacon and Eggs needed, will pay a premium cash! The chicken looked at the pig and said, we should go in and donate get some cash! The pig looked at the chicken and said, this might work for you, this does not cost you much, you will just lay another egg in the future, but as for me, I have to give everything! I can't just give a piece of me away and keep living! Silly Story I know!! But let me illustrate it this way: **Luke 20:46 "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and love greetings in the marketplaces and the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feasts,** The teachers of the law are people who gave eggs! They loved power, money and honor, demanded of others what they would not give themselves, they gave eggs.... Now lets contrast it a few verses later with **Luke 21:1-4 Jesus looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the offering box, 2 and he saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins. 3 And he said, "Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them. 4 For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."** That widow gave bacon! She Loved God so much she gave sacrificially, she gave everything!! She gave bacon! And is this not how we do this in our Christian walk!? We give a little here and a little there as long as it does not cost us too much, Ill give an egg, but God wants His bacon, he is not satisfied with just an egg! Its unconditional surrender! When we hear inspirational stories like Bob's they are inspirational because Bob gave bacon, not eggs. I want to love nothing more than I love Jesus! I want to treasure Him more than anything else here on this earth! This is a lifelong journey, we will never be perfect in this. It's a journey to release control, and adopt unconditional surrender as we live our lives, and things will come up!! I do not know what it will take in your life... I know what God has been asking me to surrender.... Its NOT easy.... And it will look different for all of us, but let me encourage you, please start now, do not wait, its almost Christmas, what a great season to practice surrender right!! This world needs Jesus, but if all I have to give is me, and that is not enough, I need to Surrender.... **Philippians 3:8 What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ.** Where is God calling us to surrender? Now is your opportunity.... So lets Pray...

Thank you for joining us this morning, if you need any prayer, you can go for after service prayer or email us at prayer@mysouthland.com and if you need a helping hand, please contact us at care@mysouthland.com. God Bless....