

SURRENDER OF RIGHTS



An American missionary was deputed to serve among one of the remotest African tribes. He found that those tribal people had a culture of stealing. The missionary loved pineapples and had planted them in his garden. But, as the pineapples ripened, the natives would steal them immediately. The missionary would conscientize them, *“Stealing is a sin. Do not steal. I own this garden and these pineapples belong to me. I will give you money to plant pineapples outside my garden. You can eat those pineapples, but, do not touch mine.”*

During harvest time, behold, they would again steal the pineapples! He was infuriated. He brought a German shepherd and kept it to guard. Those tribals had never seen such a huge dog and they took it for a tiger. Out of fear, they absolutely stopped entering the area that belonged to the missionary. **Now how can you be a missionary if no one visits you?**

Discouraged, the missionary went back to the States. Over there, he attended a Bible study where the preacher was insisting, **“Surrender your rights to God.”** The missionary felt convicted. He prayed, *“Lord, I have been working relentlessly for the past seven years for those tribals, and not even one of them has turned to you. I am terribly angry with those people. Yet, I surrender to you, my garden and my pineapples. I surrender to you everything.”*

The missionary returned to Africa and resumed his work. The natives were surprised, because when they began stealing his pineapples, the missionary was no longer angry. They came to him and said, *“Teacher, what has happened to you? When we now steal pineapples, you are no longer angry. **Have you become a CHRISTIAN?**”* The missionary felt convicted and realized that the reason why the natives never became the followers of Christ, was, that he had failed to be a good example. He told the natives, *“I am no longer the owner of these pineapples. Everything I own belongs to the Lord.”*

The natives began discussing amongst themselves, *“Now we understand why our children get sick when we steal these pineapples. When we go hunting and fishing, we do not catch anything. Because God might be angry with us, as we are stealing God’s possession.”* The natives felt convicted. They began to bring fruits from their own gardens for the missionary, as now they understood that **‘A Christian is someone who has surrendered his all’**. Friends, we cannot have a relationship with Jesus with the idea, *“Lord, I will follow you, except...”* **No exceptions! No negotiables!**

How many of you feel anxious when somebody takes your cellphone and begins to check your text messages? Most of us get restless. Because **you feel that your ‘Right to Privacy’ is being violated**. Perhaps the deeper issue is *‘Are you ashamed of something?’* and the root issue is *‘Have you surrendered everything to the Lord? Have you surrendered your life to Jesus?’*

A life that is surrendered would be a life of peace – a life of joy – a life of restedness. A life that is not surrendered will be full of anxiety and you’ll always be agitated when people violate your rights. **‘Surrendering one’s rights’, is a one-time decision that is to be followed in Present Continuous tense for the entire life.**

I would conclude with the words of George Muller, *“There was a day when I died to George Muller, his opinions, preferences, tastes and will, died to the world, its approval or censure, died to the approval or blame even of my brethren and friends, and since then, I have studied to show myself **APPROVED UNTO GOD.**”*

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