

Please feel free to print out or "Save as... Text" this article to your hard drive. (Microsoft Explorer browsers may lose spacing between paragraphs.)

THE POWER OF SURRENDER

P.M.H. Atwater, L.H.D., Ph.D. (Hon.) P. O. Box 7691 Charlottesville, VA 22906-7691

© 2001 P.M.H. Atwater, L.H.D., Ph.D. (Hon.)

Surrender. . . to yield to the possession or power of another. . . to give one's self up. Other words used by the dictionary to describe surrender are relinquish, submit, abandon, forego, renounce.

We learn about the power surrender can have in our life via stages - as a child when we surrender to our parent, as a student when we surrender to our teachers and the act of schooling, as an employee when we surrender to our boss and the rule of business, with sex when we surrender to the passion of feeling, in love when we surrender to a power greater than our own.

How many times each day have you surrendered or given up your power? Maybe while you were watching television, in pain or while afraid, when doing chores or caught up in a repetitive habit or addiction, while listening to music, with politics, in court, or during the throes of establishing a relationship with another person.

I submit to you that we all do a lot of surrendering, giving our power away. This is both beneficial and debilitating. It can help us to lay back, relax, strengthen our reserves, give support, ensure our security. But it can also lead to believing what we would be wise to question, while allowing ourselves to be programmed or misled. We can become purveyors of the status quo, content to always follow lest Atwater, we embarrass ourselves by speaking up. In other words, we can become too comfortable, too safe, by avoiding those moments when we would be better off stepping aside and walking a different path.

Surrender changes the context of how it manifests, however, when we reach beyond what the world offers beyond what we can see, hear, feel, and touch and sense the presence of a greater, grander power and an expanded and more expansive way of living unconstrained by convention or culture. When we recognize this power, God's Power, the act of surrender takes on new meaning. Putting God first, yielding to God's Presence in our lives, unveils a surprising fact: we don't always have to make things happen; they can happen by themselves. Neither must we always have a plan or be in control. We can surrender our power to A Higher Power. We can let go trusting that our lives, our needs, our desires, our wants, are in better hands than our own. The result may not be pleasing, but it will always be the right thing at the right time in the right way for us to deepen our awareness of God's Power and grow in that awareness.

It's magical when this happens. Synchronically reigns as your life begins to flow, sometimes smoothly, sometimes not, but always forward. A new world, a new reality, a new you emerges. And you possess a new lens for the eyes of your soul.

To surrender to a power beyond what can be imagined in human terms can be frighteningly awesome, even overwhelming. So must of us begin by "testing the waters" via promises. Do you remember making God a

promise? Maybe several? How old were you when you did this? What were the circumstances? What was the result? I thought about this for myself, and three such times popped into my mind.

When I was nine years old I knelt down on my knees in front of God's Holy Altar. I was in the Children's Sanctuary of the United Methodist Church in Twin Falls, Idaho, and everyone was gone. The place was dark when I knelt there and promised God I would never use God's name in vain, and I would never drink or smoke. As a child I was taught that you always keep a promise no matter what. And I kept my promise, irrespective of considerable peer pressure to the contrary. Several decades later I had occasion to undergo medical testing, and it was discovered that I was allergic to tobacco and to alcohol (if taken internally). The doctor stated that in his opinion had I ever taken up either habit, drinking or smoking, I would have never made it to my twenties. When I was seventeen, I was sitting in the choir loft during Sunday Service at that same Methodist Church when Rev. Mac, as we called him, asked that anyone desiring to commit his or her life to God and join in church membership come forward. I felt as if two invisible beings grabbed ahold of both my arms, lifted me from my chair, marched me across the loft and down the stairs to where Rev. Mac was standing. And I found myself saying, yes, yes, yes, as a beam of sunlight broke through the skylight above and lit only me. Not the minister. Not the congregation. Others saw what happened and commented on it. My only interest, though, was having fun in the sun. A heavy cloud cover had blanketed our area for several days. Thinking that at last the gray was gone, I ran past well-wishers and flew out the door - to find the sky even darker. There was no way a beam of light could have appeared in the sanctuary. What happened to me while I was inside the beam, all the promises I made, frightened me. In a state of confusion I rejected the event and turned away.

And when I was twenty-nine and my world collapsed. There were so many tragedies in my family, three kids in the hospital that year, one in twice, money scarce, the stress-load unbearable. I had what the doctors called a "mild nervous breakdown." It didn't take me long to realize that drugs made matters worse, so I threw them away, knowing deep inside me that somehow a better way to heal would manifest. It did. Nine people came forward, all of them members of a "Search for God" Study Group (a chapter program that was part of the Association For Research and Enlightenment, an organization based on the psychic readings of the late Edgar Cayce). The Group also practiced Huna (the spiritual philosophy of the Hawaiian Islands). While I sat in their midst, they conducted a 44-breath healing prayer in my behalf. I felt bolts of electricity shoot through both my arms at the second their prayer ended. Awestruck I said: "I don't know who you are. I don't understand what you believe or what you do, but can I join your group and study, too?" They answered yes. Three months later my life had transformed in wonderful ways and I knew I had made the right choice. What I had cast aside at seventeen, I recommitted to God as a priority in my life.

I'm certain you each have your own stories, promises made, promises kept and not kept, and what happened to you because you ever made such a promise. When you surrender to God, though, that's not like a promise. It is the full, unconditional giving of one's self all the way wholly completely to the Higher Will, The One God, Maker of Heaven and Earth and all that is seen and unseen.

This total giving of one's self requires a level of trust and faith in the reality of God's Will that is not to be taken lightly. Seldom is this form of surrender easily maintained or comfortable in nature. Other lives will also be affected beside your own. Count on it, for there is no way you can commit yourself to God's Will without involving others, touching them in some way, uplifting and inspiring.

It's like when you surrender yourself to The Higher Will, you become as if a pebble flung into the middle of a huge lake. Ripples spread from the splash you make. They grow and grow, becoming ever larger, bigger, as each ripple becomes a wave that reaches shorelines far and distant. When you make that leap, and that is what surrendering to God is all about, taking a leap, you opt for realities that exceed imagination and for contacts and interconnections that surpass belief.

Look back at your own life. Have you ever done this? Given all to The All? If you haven't, I suggest that you consider making the commitment. No matter how easy or difficult your path once you make God's Power central to your life, the satisfaction that can and usually does follow is well worth the effort. I have done this myself four times. When I was thirty, the year after my breakdown, I was uplifted by the power of spirit in a moment of utter surrender. My mind opened as a result and I discovered that I could think and think creatively.

A few days later I had an opportunity to join the Boise Chapter of the Idaho Writers League. With no particular desire or talent evident at the time, I stepped forward. In six months, I sold my first feature article to The Idaho Statesman newspaper; six months after that I was elected President of the Boise group; six months later I was a full-time professional writer working for the Idaho Department of Commerce and Development (it has since been divided into two departments).

At the age of thirty-three, I deepened my surrender to God and the spirit worlds opened for me, and I explored altered states of consciousness and experimented with what could be proved about the phenomenon and what could not. I was inspired by the physical manifestation of a dead friend to share with others what was helping me, so I founded Inner Forum (Idaho's first non-profit, metaphysical corporation). I created a speakers bureau as well, so gifted lecturers and teachers could tour the Northwest. Volunteers came forward, a monthly mini-magazine was produced, and people by the thousands were affected in positive ways - always with prayers said at the start of each activity, and meditation a necessity before any decision was made.

After I turned thirty-nine, I found myself reassessing my life, unhappy with the degree of spirituality I had attained. I felt superficial, empty, unworthy. In the depths of those dark times, I again surrendered to God. This time, in the giving of my life, I was opened to death and I died three times. And each time I had a near-death experience three such incidents in three months. It was early 1977. That fall I had three relapses, one of which was adrenal failure. To detail all that occurred is not the province of this article, but I do want to admit that my third episode was the most impactful and it haunted me for some time. Among what I witnessed during that experience was the innerworkings of creation and consciousness (much of what I observed is in my book Future Memory). Then I heard a voice speak. I called it The Voice Like None Other, for I was familiar with angel voices, and guides and guardians and all manner of spirit beings, and The Voice was unlike any of them. It was as if every molecule and cell in the universe stood up and saluted this Voice. My sense was that this was of God. I became a researcher of near-death states because of what The Voice told me. It is not an exaggeration to say that the research I have done since then, and the five books I compiled about my findings, have touched the lives of millions in the United States and abroad.

Never did I ever have any idea what would happen when I put God first in my life, not once, but again and again - each time deepening that commitment; each time releasing more of the self I was.

On May 22nd during the 22nd year of my research, while I was standing in prayer facing the Holy of Holies in the Basilica of St. Joseph's Oratory, Montreal, my third near-death experience reoccurred. Technically that episode would be called a near-death-like experience, as I was in perfect health and nothing threatened. The manifestation was literal and physical. I felt as if I were being "fried" on the spot by the energy that was present. The "self" I was became the "Self" I am at that moment, and I surrendered surrender.

Peace so filled me that there was no room left for promises or commitments or desires or wants or supplications or needs. There was only peace. And I discovered that peace is the state of existence at the heart of Creation's Centerpoint. In peace there is no polarity, no contrast, no opposites, no struggle, no decisions. In peace there is only peace. In peace all things balance and there is equilibrium. And my heart was opened. What I have learned from the power of surrender, what I have experienced throughout my long history grappling with God, is that the deepest depths of satisfaction and meaning in life come, not just from the giving of one's self to A Higher Power, God's Will for us, but from releasing and letting go of even the need

to let go. Surrendering the power of surrender. The peace that follows passeth all understanding.

You become what you really are joy.

P.M.H.Atwater, L.H.D., Ph.D. (Hon.) is the author of many books concerning near-death states, the latest being FUTURE MEMORY, CHILDREN OF THE NEW MILLENNIUM, and THE COMPLETE IDIOT'S GUIDE TO THE NEAR-DEATH EXPERIENCE. Check out her website at www.pmhatwater.com for more information about her other books and her "Brain Shift/ Spirit Shift" model for exploring transformations of consciousness.

1464970

Visitors to this site.