

**There is no alternative to full surrender to the Lordship of Christ** (Colossians 2:6,7) and wholeheartedly seeking (Jeremiah 29:13) and following God's way (1 Peter 2:21). We have to forsake the world (1 John 2:15- 17) and we have to give up living for selfish reasons and motivations (Matthew 16:24). We must repent of our past sinful ways of life (Isaiah 55:7) and then put all our energies, time, strength, talents, money and abilities under God's control and live *fully* for Him with *all* our heart, soul, mind and strength (Romans 12:1,2).

You give up your sins and your strengths, your loves and your lusts, your ambitions and your failures, your talents and your wasted opportunities, your abilities and your hurts. And God gives you forgiveness, eternal life, love, joy, peace, guidance, opportunities, fulfilment, companionship, direction, meaning and purpose in life!

You give up everything you have, to gain everything God has for you .

*"He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose"* Jim Elliot

The Way of Salvation is described in the Bible as **a search** (Jeremiah 29:13), **a journey** (Matthew 7:13,14), **a war** (2 Corinthians 10:3-5) and **a contest** (1 Timothy 6:12). Christians are described as **pilgrims** (1 Peter 2 :11), **disciples** (Mark 8 :34), **soldiers** (2 Timothy 2 :3), **long distance runners** (1 Corinthians 9:24-27). The Bible is full of words describing: fighting, overcoming, advancing, conquering, struggling, suffering and succeeding.

These descriptions speak of progress, advancement, movement. They speak of a continuous ongoing experience and way of life, not of a once and for all gesture or a technical theory, or mere theological understanding.

*"I asked for **strength**, that I might **achieve**,  
I was made **weak**, that I might learn humbly to **obey**."*

*I asked for **health**, that I might do **greater things**.  
I was given **infirmity** that I might do **better things**."*

*I asked for **riches**, that I might be **happy**.  
I was given **poverty**, that I might be **wise**."*

*I asked for **power**, that I might have  
the **praise of men**,  
I was given **weakness**, that I might  
**feel the need of God**."*

*I asked for **all things**, that I might **enjoy life**,  
I was given **life** that I might **enjoy all things**."*

*I got **nothing that I asked for** — **but everything that I had hoped for**."*

*Almost **despite myself**, my **unspoken prayers were answered**."*

*I among all people, **most richly blessed**."*

Prayer by a Confederate Soldier

The heart of the Gospel is a restored relationship with God through Christ Jesus (1 Corinthians 1 :9; 1 Peter 3:18) where *communication* and *contact* is established and maintained with God; where needs are met, where character is developed and eternal purposes accomplished.

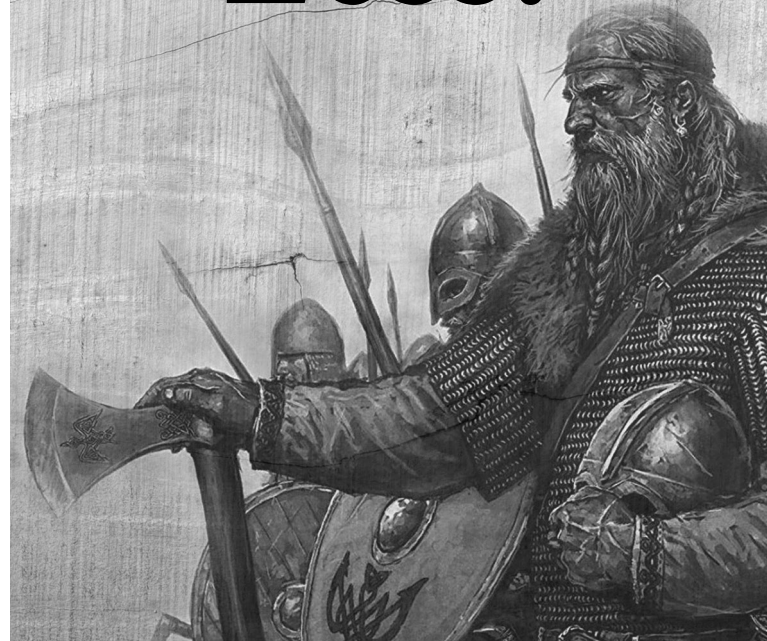
You must realise that God has got so very much more to teach you and to give you, so much more to show you, *so much more* for you to experience and achieve.

*"Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen."* Ephesians 3:20-21

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# Do Not Settle for Less!



Are you one of those many Christians who are in a **spiritual desert**?

Are you **frustrated** and bewildered by an emptiness and a **dissatisfaction** with your life and your faith?

Are you crying out for something more, something that will fill your empty feeling with deep peace of heart and mind and a genuine capacity for and experience of love?

Do you find it necessary to put up a **false front** in Christian meetings pretending to be what you are not?

Do you pretend to have the peace and joy that your soul knows nothing about?

Sometimes you think that you must be the only person having such a frustratingly empty experience; you just cannot tell how many of those 'other Christians' are also hiding their hurt and their needs behind a false front.

This tragic situation is robbing many of the true joy and deep peace and real love that the Christian life is meant to be (Romans 14:17).

The root of this problem is the **shallow** experience and **superficial** message proclaimed by all too many Christian groups today. The **short cut methods** and **over simplified formulas** have just failed to work. It is as though the devil himself has advocated "*another gospel*" (Galatians 1:6-9), polluted the Christian message, adulterating its contents and confusing its issues.

The enemy has reduced the Greatest Message of all time, alternately, to a **cheap oversimplified formula**, or to a **dead overcomplicated theology**. Christians, apparently ignorant of these wiles of the devil, have accepted all too easily these corruptions of the Gospel.

The concept of a **technical salvation that is all theory and no experience** is ridiculous and leads to dead theology and a lack of reality (2 Timothy 3:5).

The **emphasis of feelings and blessings** to the **exclusion of commitment, obedience and discipleship** is a sure way to failure and disappointment (Matthew 7 :15-23).

The notion of a **once and for all token gesture of commitment** to God being sufficient to effect eternal salvation and inner fulfilment is to invite utter disillusionment (Luke 14 :27).

These concepts are all unworthy of our Great God and hopelessly inadequate in conveying the Biblical Message or in promoting true spiritual life and deep inner spiritual satisfaction and fulfillment.

The devil has a **counterfeit** for everything the Lord offers. He has **fake fruit** to offer - it is not the real thing, although it looks the same. One way you know is that when you taste it you find it is plastic fruit: it looks real, but it is not! It does not give deep peace of heart and mind, true joy or real love. It is plastic fruit!

Now why is it that so many who try the counterfeit product, and tasting its *synthetic* flavour, try to hide their disappointment thinking that perhaps this is all that the Lord has to give? How can we even think that God's ways are unsatisfying? **If the way is disappointing then it is not God's Way!** If the fruit is unsatisfying - **YOU ARE BARKING UP THE WRONG TREE!**

- God's way is **not easy** but it is **fulfilling!**
- His way is **not cheap** - but it is **the best!**
- His way is **not trouble free** - but it is **the way of peace of heart and mind!**
- His way is **not all blessings** - but it is **all joy!**
- His way **does not keep us from trials** - but it does involve **God's constant love!**

If you are content with a superficial, lukewarm, stagnant, defeated, mundane, mediocre existence then God will not give you a deep, on-fire, overflowing, fulfilling, victorious, supernatural life.

By settling for less - we rob ourselves of **the Best**. The Lord cannot give us the best if we settle for less. Good is the main enemy of the best. If you are content with your present spiritual state then the Lord can do no more for you. **Complacency is the deadly enemy of advancement and progress.**

The trouble is that too many of us have settled for a second rate and degenerate form of spiritual life. To too many Jesus is not really Lord, but He is just a '*constitutional monarch*.' Many have made Him *the impersonal figurehead of their religious convictions*, but how they govern their lives, how they make their decisions is strictly their business. You want His help, but not His interference! Jesus can save me, by all means; He can answer my prayers, Yes; but Jesus must not tell me what *career* to choose, what *friends* to have, what *clothes* to buy, what *language* to use, what kind of *life* to live or what *books* to read. He must not tell me what to spend my *money* and my *time* on. You do not really believe the truth that: **God gives the best to those who leave the choice to Him.** You feel that God is trying to cheat you of pleasure, you feel that you know better than God. You have a *superficial commitment*. You have settled for *the counterfeit*. You are *missing out* on The Real Thing. You let the label fool you, and now you are wondering why you are not fulfilled and satisfied!

The truth is that **you cannot expect maximum blessing from minimum commitment**; there is no short cut method, no four-point programme, no cut and dried canned salvation!