



Surrender to Win

Recently I was asked to give a one-sentence definition of spirituality. The answer I gave was admittedly inadequate, but it caused me to begin working on a better answer. What I have come up with doesn't cover the entire waterfront, but it gives a bottom line with which to begin. I share it with you in case someone asks you that same question or perhaps you want some clarification for yourself.

The sentence is this: Spirituality is the prayerful experience of surrendering yourself to God's grace, mercy, and love, thereby learning to trust every part of your life to God's direction with full expectation that you will be led.

A quick recall of the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, however you understand it, shows their experience to be the very antithesis of spirituality. They wanted to do things their way rather than surrendering to God's will for them. We see all around us and often within ourselves where this obstinate self-determination has gotten us.

This surrendering to God is not a once-for-all event in our lives, but a daily process, which serves to keep us properly aligned with God and all our senses tuned to Divine direction.

Robin, my wife, and I have been reading a series of novels by Lauraine Snelling who writes with moving description about Norwegian immigrants who settled in the Dakota Territory in the mid 19th century. The stories are strikingly similar to the ones Robin's own grandmother had told her about her immigration from Norway and settling in North Dakota.

I introduce this wonderful series of novels because of the dominating spirituality that sustained these settlers through countless hardships. They lived out their *surrender to God*. Although they worked diligently and indefatigably to make their own way in life, they were nevertheless acutely aware they were living on *the edge* and consequently trusted everything to God's grace and care. They were confident and vocal about this ever-present Divine resource and were relentless in their use of it.

I have seen no better illustration of the power of a spiritual life than is depicted in these novels. I suggest you read all 12 of them. You can find them in the local library or on Amazon. They are sequential so begin with the first one, *An Untamed Land*, and follow the series as listed. They will goad your spirit and move you to a more committed spiritual way of living each day of your life.

