

**PEACE WITH SELF** - This may sound at odds with what you learned about humility, but it is not really. I am talking about the peace one may obtain when one is really free to be the person God created them to be; not the person you may have thought you had to be. This requires something called self-surrender.

### **What is Self-surrender?**

For our purpose here, self-surrender is submission to God's greater authority. Submission is the act of yielding to the control of God. When we submit, we leave or commit a decision or action to the discretion or judgment of God. We yield, resign, surrender, or defer to the opinion, will, power or authority of God; or the need of another as He directs. When we are submitted, we strive to comply with, obey God, or fulfill the needs of another. Another word that will help us understand self-surrender and submission is humility. However, it is very important to understand correctly the biblical concept and definition of humility.

### **What Self-surrender is Not**

Self-surrender is **not** self-extinction. It is **not** the extinguishing of one's selfhood or ego. It is **not** self-disparagement. Over-doing self-deprecation is **not** pleasing to God and is actually the other side of the "pride" coin. The opposite of pride and self-centeredness is **not** self-despising or self-contempt, but rather God-centeredness. There is a proper place for self-love in the Christian life and love for self is as necessary for spiritual wholeness and maturity as is love for God and for other people. Consider Matthew 22:36-40 and Ephesians 5:28-29, and Matthew 7:12. The heart of the Christian life is agape love, serving God with your whole self and serving others just as you take care of yourself.

However, as a cautionary example, self-love is **not** self-actualization. This psychological term is used by some to teach people to "accept yourself as you are". That sounds good, and can be, but only if you include, and submit to, the input from God and His Word; from the Holy Spirit and His speaking to your conscience. Proverbs 19:23 tells us: "The fear of the LORD leads to Life; Then one rests content, untouched by trouble. (NIV)" Luke tells us in his Gospel story (Luke 3:7-14) about John, the baptizer, when he was speaking to the crowds who came to him to be baptized. He told them to, "produce fruit in keeping with repentance". He spoke to the ungenerous, the cheater and deceiver, and the bully, and told them to behave differently; to put away their "old selves". Another reckless idea to "express yourself as you want to" is obviously lacking the consideration of one's neighbor or God. In this school of psychology, the self does not need to be surrendered, only developed. It feeds the very disease that needs to be cured, namely the idea that one can be whole while independent from God; that one can be complete and sufficient without God or neighbor. This only promotes **self-centeredness** and **self-worship**, and strengthens the addictions and problems from which we wish to be free.