

SURRENDER TO LOVE



TIMING: Saturday PM; after Break/Presencing Transition following Burning of Shame

PURPOSE: to prepare ourselves to lay down our False Selves and to consecrate ourselves to God

ENERGY: strong, exhortation, sacred tone

MATERIALS:

- Plastic grocery bag under the chair of each Attendee or available up front
 - Blank canvas tote bag
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THE TALK

Please empty the contents of your False Self bag; there are plastic grocery bags under your seat (or up front) if needed. Place your False Self tote bag on your lap.

The Cross is the visible expression of God's yearning for you to come HOME... to return to the Garden – to that experience of unfettered connection to God and His love. You were created by Love for Love. ***You were created by Love for Love.***

Ladies (Sisters), take a moment to look at the False Selves you have drawn on your bag. **[pause]**

As you look at them, remember that beneath every False Self is a holy longing. All of your longings are like a trail – a pathway – to the River that leads back to the Source. This trail leads to the threshold of a great room – the Throne Room of God – HOME! And the Cross is the doorway.

This extravagant expression of love for you is a doorway you get to run through to experience the love of God - a love which frees you from having to search for your value, your significance, to be seen, to be accepted, to be known, to understand, to control....

God's love frees you from all of this!

[Model this part with a tote bag: as you speak, roll up your tote bag and grasp it in your hands.]

Take your bag into your hands. Crumple it up like this, and hold on real tight – so tight that it is uncomfortable—as if you were saying, “I won't let go of these False Selves or the messages that drive them. I won't let go of the fear, the shame, the pain...”

What might happen if you keep holding on to these false ways of living? What is the impact to yourself and to your loved ones? **[Ask them and wait for several responses.]**

Will you risk letting go? Will you loosen your grip tonight, even if it's just a little?

There are different ways to deal with these False Selves. You can hate them. You can hate yourself for your behavior. You can judge yourself. You can ignore them. You can say "I'll never do this again!" You can do all of these things. But, none of this will transform you.

Will you begin to let go? **[pause]**

Go ahead and release your grip a little bit. Notice the space that is made in your hands. This space is where Grace comes in. Augustine said, *"God is always wanting to give us good things, but our hands are too full to receive them."* Open your hands. This is how God comes in to fill you.

This is a key piece of understanding how to walk with God. All that you are required to do is to LET GO – to make SPACE. Let go of your control. The question is, **will you surrender to Him tonight?** And then a bit more tomorrow? And the next day? Will you choose to be transformed by the experience of His Love?

We are now going to give you a chance to practice letting go and opening yourself up to Grace.

We'll play a song, and when you are ready, come to the River of Grace, sit down and silently talk to God. Take your time. There's room at the Cross for many. After taking some time with God, symbolically grasp your False Selves tightly in your hands, and then let go - even if it's just a little. Take hold of the blue cloth in the space you've created in your hands and embrace the River of Grace.

As you hold onto your bag and the River of Grace simultaneously, silently speak a statement of surrender to God. **[Model this prayer out loud.]**

"Here I am Father, I choose to give up a little bit tonight and make space for you - for your love."

Then place your False Selves under the River of Grace. Spend another moment with God, and then return to the circle where you can let this moment sink in.

We invite you now to enter into an attitude of release and surrender. In silence take some time to reflect on your False Selves and what is coming up for you. Reflect on your deepest longings. And when you are ready, come to the Cross. Surrender to Love tonight.

Music Begins