



## THE PRAYER OF SURRENDER

I was scheduled to fly from Philadelphia to Pittsburg this week to do a television show. On a good day it takes me about 80 minutes to drive to the Philadelphia airport from my house. Snow flurries were forecast for Tuesday but they weren't supposed to last. But they did and got heavier and heavier as the morning wore on.



I began to worry. I have a disease my children have dubbed, "Worst Case Scenario Disease." Perhaps you have it too. My mind began imagining the worst things that might happen while I was driving to the airport in the snow. For example, I might miss my plane or it would be cancelled and I wouldn't be able to get to the television show. Or, I might get in a terrible accident and never make my plane. Or, the plane would crash because the wings got icy. Crazy, I know, but I'm just being real.

But the good news is, I have learned how to get myself out of such emotional quicksand and I want to teach you how too. It's called the prayer of surrender.

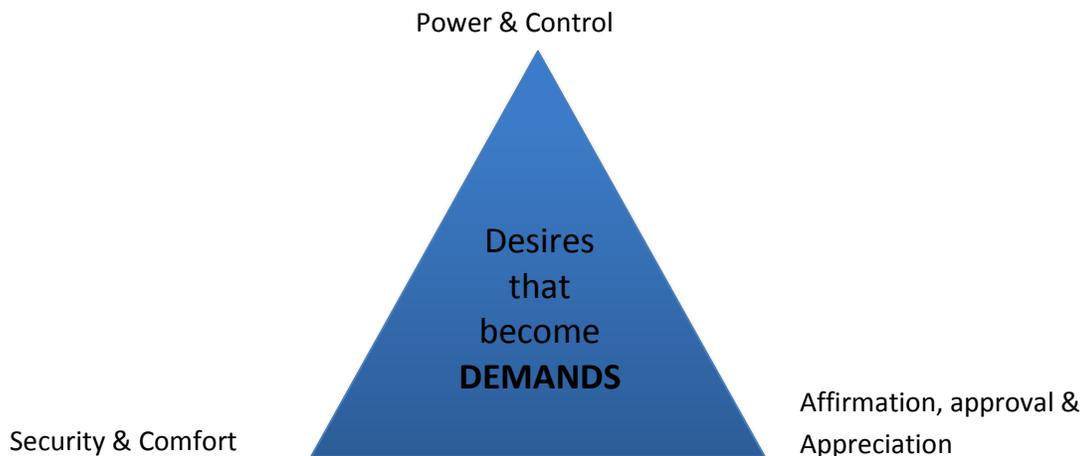
We all have many desires – good and legitimate desires, nothing God would disapprove of. But what starts to happen to us when our desires get delayed, frustrated or denied?

My desire in that moment was to get to the airport, make my plane and fulfill my responsibilities to be on that television show. Perhaps your desire is to have a stress free Christmas, a nice family dinner, a spouse that loves you, children who obey you, and a paycheck that supports your financial obligations.

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There is nothing wrong with your desires. But when our desires start to become demands our anxious, angry, or discouraged countenance tells us we're slipping into dangerous territory. In those moments we don't believe God is enough. We want (demand) more than he's provided. We're bowing down to an idol (what we MUST have) that is now RULING us instead of Christ.

Typically human desires cluster around three main themes. Power and control, affirmation, approval, & appreciation, and security and comfort.



Once we recognize that our legitimate desires have grown into idols, we have a choice –to cling to what we want or to trust God and surrender.

The prayer of surrender goes like this:

*Lord, I want to get to the airport on time and meet my obligations. I'm aware that my body is tense and my heart is gripped with worry (anger, hurt, or whatever emotion you are experiencing in the moment) that I'm not going to get what I want.*

*Right now I surrender my desire for control over this situation. I cannot control the weather, how fast the traffic moves, or whether or not I get to the airport or the plane is cancelled. I surrender my desire for power over these things to you.*

*I surrender my desire for affirmation and approval. I want to keep all my obligations and meet my responsibilities. I want people to like me and approve of my work. I let go of my desire for these things. I choose to trust you for my value and worth.*

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*I surrender my desire for security and comfort. I don't know what will happen during this snowstorm but I trust you love me and are in control.*

Let us learn from Mary, the mother of God, who surrendered her desire for control when she said to the angel, how can this be? She surrendered her desire for affirmation and approval when she let go of what Joseph and her mother and father would think of her when they found out she was pregnant. And she surrendered her desire for security and comfort when she trusted God with her life, her body, her future, and her family.

My gift to you is this prayer. My challenge to you is that you practice it, particularly during this busy season. Let go of the demand to have power and control, approval, appreciation and affirmation and security and comfort. Then notice what happens. The peace of God that surpasses all understanding will come to guard your heart and mind in Christ.

I hope you all have a wonderful holiday. God Bless.