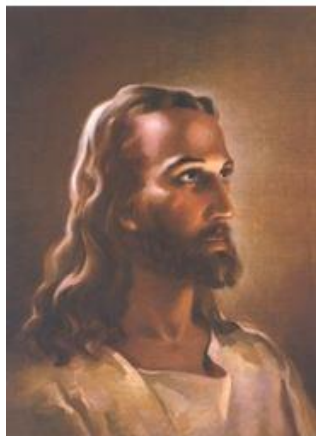


## Surrender

I recently read a fictional story that provides a great analogy about surrendering your life to Jesus.

The story is set during the prime basketball career of Michael Jordan. To make this story more meaningful, picture yourself in this story. Michael Jordan is your all-time favorite player. You have been given an all-expense paid trip to Chicago to see him play. At the arena the Chicago Bulls come out to warm up, but Michael Jordan is not with the team. Shortly before the game is to start two Secret Service men come to your seat, flash their badges and say to you, “We need you to come with us.” They take you to a room that only has a folding chair and a number 23 jersey on it. You think, “That’s Michael Jordan’s number.” You are hoping he is about to autograph the jersey but then the Secret Service guys tell you the bad news: “Michael Jordan was killed in a plane crash last night.” It gets worse. One of the Secret Service guys says to you, “We need somebody to take his place.” “That’s impossible,” you say. “He is the best player on the face of the earth. No one can replace him.” The man points a finger in your face and says, “You’re going to replace him.” You say, “I can’t possibly replace the best player on the planet.” Then, you are told, “Not only are you going to play in his place, but if you don’t win the game, you’re going to die.” The stakes are as high as they can get. If you don’t get out on the court, you’re going to die – so you might as well try. You put on the jersey and head for the court. You discover that Michael’s greatness takes much more than just wearing a jersey with his number on it. You play the game to the best of your ability, but it is not going well.



At halftime, your team is losing badly. Then you hear a voice whisper to you from behind. You have heard that voice on TV. It is the voice of Michael Jordan. He says, “You can’t win this game on your own. But I know how to play, and if you will allow my spirit to come inside you and play through you, I’ll be able to play the game the way it’s supposed to be played. Not only that, but I can win this game through you.” “I just might live through this,” you think.

He’s the best and he is offering to help. And, the alternative is death. You agree to let him help but because you don’t fully trust what’s happening, you continue to struggle on the court. You are still trying to win with your limited, amateur abilities. The results are mixed because you are not allowing Michael to take full control. As the game goes on, however, the more you surrender, the better the results. Finally, you give him total control and, miraculously, you win the game.

Sometimes we forget that Jesus lived on this earth, too. He has experienced the same pains and stresses that we feel. He knows the right way to live. Because of his life and resurrection He is already victorious. We can be, too. As long as we have breath, there is still time. Jesus offers to help us as we face the challenges of our life, but we can’t achieve success if we try to do it on our own. We can’t win at life if we don’t trust Him completely. There is no half way. The win that we seek is eternal life and is only achievable by surrendering our life totally to Him.

The character in our fictitious story couldn’t play like Michael Jordan unless he gave up total control to Michael. Success only came because the character invited Michael’s spirit to be within him. We can’t live a life of Jesus Christ without Him being within us. And, we will eventually die an eternal death if we don’t trust Him completely. There is no victory in giving over only part of your life but still holding onto the old you. So, when He offers to come into your life, welcome Him with open arms. Let His Spirit guide you in all that you do and let His light shine through you. That can only happen if you surrender your life completely to Him. Surrender is not waving the white flag of defeat but instead, is gaining eternal life because Jesus lives inside of you. Surrender is the key to success. Let His Spirit dwell within you.

**The Bible says:** *I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me (Galatians 2:20). Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up (James 4:10).*

**Prayer:** Our Heavenly Father. In our do-it-yourself world it is difficult to give up control. But we must if we are to live a life dependent on You and to receive Jesus as our Lord and Savior, and to see eternal life with you. Amen.

The story paraphrases a story in Scott Rigsby’s book, Unthinkable, pages 72-74. Published by Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.