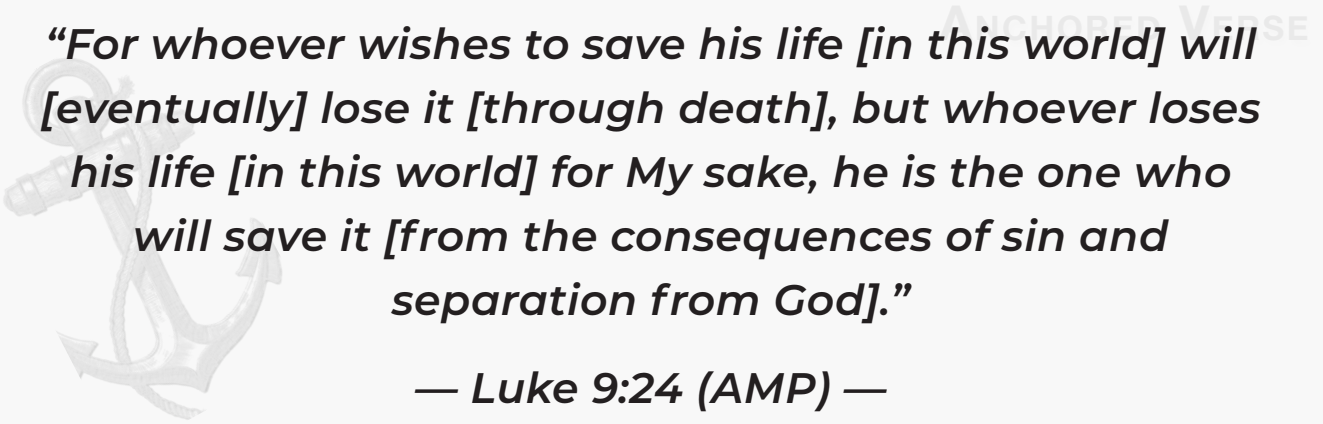


The Line

Where Following Becomes Surrender



“For whoever wishes to save his life [in this world] will [eventually] lose it [through death], but whoever loses his life [in this world] for My sake, he is the one who will save it [from the consequences of sin and separation from God].”

— Luke 9:24 (AMP) —

Every disciple eventually reaches a line where following Jesus requires surrendering the life they are trying to preserve. This week, I am reflecting on what our need for control, comfort, and self-protection may reveal about who or what we are truly following.

by Sean Brannan

Friday, 24 July, 2026

Welcome friend,

Welcome to this week's Anchored Update. Thank you for taking a few minutes to read, reflect, and walk through these questions with me. I never take your time or attention for granted, and I'm grateful that we get to keep exploring what it means to follow Jesus together.

A Quick Update: Earlier this week, I received notice that the physical proof copy of *From Survival to Surrender* had shipped. It should arrive this weekend or early next week, and both the book and its companion journal are still on track to be available on July 31, 2026.

The timing felt fitting because the tension between preserving our lives and entrusting them to Jesus sits at the heart of the book. Much of what we call control, independence, wisdom, or responsibility may actually be self-protection formed by fear. Surrender begins when we trust Jesus enough to stop treating survival as the highest goal.

You can still [preorder your copy directly through R3B Press](#) and save a few dollars before release. Thank you again for your encouragement, support, and patience throughout this process. Seeing these books actually become a reality has been humbling.

I'd also genuinely appreciate any feedback you may have about the website, topics you'd like to see discussed, or something you may be walking through in this season of life. We are a community of believers called to encourage, strengthen, and build one another up. You can reply directly to this email or [send me a message](#) through the website.

The Line

This week, while working on the newest entry in the [What Is Library](#), I found myself asking what it actually means to be a disciple.

The New Testament uses the Greek word *mathētēs*, which means a learner, student, or disciple. In the Jewish world of Jesus, the Hebrew term *talmid* described a student who attached himself to a teacher, not only to learn what the teacher knew, but to learn his way of life and become like him. A disciple was not simply collecting information. He was learning to bring every aspect of his life, including how he thought, understood, and responded, under the teacher's instruction, following not only what the teacher taught, but how he lived.

That definition has led me to ask some uncomfortable questions:

- » Who, or what, am I actually following?
- » Who am I becoming more like?
- » What fruit is my life bearing?
- » Underneath everything I say I believe, have I truly surrendered this life to Jesus?

Jesus didn't describe discipleship as agreement from a safe distance. He invited people to follow Him, learn His way, and place their lives under His authority. Then He drew a line that every disciple eventually encounters: *whoever tries to preserve their life will lose it. Whoever loses their life for His sake will save it.*

That feels like the line in the sand to me. It's the place where following Jesus stops being an idea we agree with and becomes a life we actually surrender.

I've also been asking myself what I'm still trying to preserve:

- » My comfort?
- » My reputation?
- » My plans?
- » My independence?
- » My ability to control the outcome?
- » My right to decide which parts of Jesus' teaching I'll follow and which parts I can quietly explain away?

Self-protection resists surrender because it learned that staying in control is how we remain safe. Many of us didn't become guarded, independent, or controlling for no reason. Those patterns may have helped us survive painful circumstances, or even endure environments where vulnerability was dangerous and trust was costly.

The good news is that Jesus meets us with compassion in those places, but He doesn't leave fear in charge of our lives.

When He tells us to deny ourselves, He's not teaching self-hatred. He isn't telling us to erase our personalities, ignore legitimate needs, tolerate abuse, or pretend that harm doesn't hurt. He's calling us to surrender our claim to final authority. We release the belief that preserving ourselves must remain our highest priority.

For some disciples, that surrender has included physical death. Many of the earliest followers of Jesus faced persecution and martyrdom because they refused to deny Him. Their lives confront the comfortable version of Christianity that asks how closely we can follow Jesus without allowing Him to disrupt anything we value.

Most of us may never face that exact life-or-death decision, but the same line appears in our everyday, ordinary lives. It appears when:

- » Obedience threatens our comfort.
- » Forgiveness costs us pride.
- » Truth costs us approval.
- » Generosity costs us security.
- » Faithfulness requires us to release an outcome we desperately want to control.
- » Following Jesus costs us something we still want to protect.

That is where I find myself looking beneath my own behavior and asking what it reveals about my trust. Am I following Jesus wherever He leads, or have I reserved the right to refuse Him when His way feels too costly?

That question reaches far beyond one dramatic moment of surrender. Jesus spoke about taking up our cross daily. Every day gives us another opportunity to place our lives back into His hands. Every decision reveals something about what we trust, what we fear, and which voice holds the greatest authority within us.

I believe that every disciple eventually reaches a line where following Jesus requires surrendering the life they are trying to preserve. I'm asking myself where that line is appearing in my life today, and whether I trust Him enough to cross it.

This Week's Articles

The second entry in the new *What Is Library* explores what it means to be a disciple of Jesus. A disciple is more than someone who agrees with His teachings or identifies with Christianity. A disciple is a committed learner and follower who places their life under His authority to learn His way and increasingly become like Him.



[What Is: Disciple](#)

Anchored Breathwork

Release Breathing (4–6) for Surrender

Purpose: To help your body settle as you bring something you’ve been tightly holding under the care and authority of God.

Posture: Sit comfortably with your feet grounded. Relax your shoulders. Open your hands in your lap as a physical reminder that you don’t have to hold everything so tightly.

1. **Inhale** through your nose for **4 seconds**.

Quiet cue: *“Jesus, I trust You...”*

2. **Exhale** slowly for **6 seconds**.

Quiet cue: *“I place this into Your hands.”*

Repeat for 5–7 cycles.

Pro Tip: If the counts feel too long, shorten the rhythm slightly. That could look like 3–5 or even 3–4. The goal is regulation, not pressure. A steady rhythm helps your body settle and gives your nervous system a simple pattern to follow.

Anchored Prayer

Abba,

Thank You for meeting me with patience and grace as I learn what it means to follow You. Show me where fear, control, or self-protection is still guiding my life. Help me recognize the places where I have held back, resisted Your direction, or trusted myself more than I have trusted You.

Teach me to surrender without fear. Renew my mind, steady my heart, and lead me in Your way. Give me the courage to follow You when obedience is uncomfortable and trust becomes costly. My life belongs to You.

Hallelujah. Amen.

Anchored Reflection

Take a few quiet moments with these questions. Resist the urge to produce the right answer. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you see honestly and respond with trust.

What am I currently trying to preserve, protect, or control?

Where have I reserved the right to refuse Jesus if following Him becomes too costly?

What does the current fruit of my life reveal about who or what I am truly following?

“Every decision reveals something about what we trust, what we fear, and which voice holds the greatest authority within us.”

Your Ideas are Important

Every newsletter, article, and Anchored Reflection begins with a real question or burden.

If something is pressing on your heart, send it my way. Each week I choose a focus for the newsletter, an article, or a reflection. What you share could be the catalyst for someone else's breakthrough. I would also love your feedback on recent articles.

 [Share What's on Your Heart](#)



Save or Share This Newsletter

I'm creating PDF versions of these newsletters so they're easier to save, revisit, and share. If this week's email encouraged you or brought something into focus, you can download the PDF version from the archive here:

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