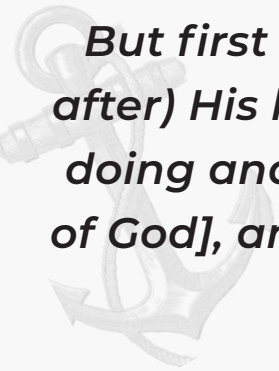


Step One

Surrender is Still Step One

ANCHORED VERSE



But first and most importantly seek (aim at, strive after) His kingdom and His righteousness [His way of doing and being right — the attitude and character of God], and all these things will be given to you also.

— Matthew 6:33 (AMP) —

Someone asked me this week why I've never become a pastor. The honest answer has two parts: what I think institutional rules actually do to people, and what I avoided as a younger man. Both are true, and neither gets me out of the responsibility I've already got. This issue: what's changing in Anchored going forward, and why surrender is still step one.

by Sean Brannan

Friday, 11 September, 2026

Welcome friend,

Thanks for being here, for reading this each week, and for sticking with me on this journey through A Life's Adventure.

A Quick Update: I'm one week in on quitting my 34 year old nicotine habit. I'm using mastic gum, nicotine patches, and zero-nicotine/caffeine pouches to get through it. My energy is unreal, more than I know what to do with yet, and my focus is still trying to catch up. If I seem a little sharper-edged than usual lately, that's why; but it's getting better by the day.

[Weapon Co](#) is shifting. I'm moving most of the inventory over to a friend who's opening his own shop, and I'm helping him get it going; grand opening is this coming Thursday. More on all of that as it settles.

[Anchored Newsletter](#): Last week I floated the idea of going every other week. I'm not doing that. I'm staying weekly. What's changing is the shape of it, and that's actually what this issue is about.

[From Survival to Surrender](#) and the [Companion Journal](#) should be live on Amazon in roughly 7 to 10 business days. More details coming as the date firms up.

A Weight, Not a Title

Someone asked me this week why I've never become a pastor, and it's not the first time I've heard that question. Here's the honest answer, the one I don't usually say out loud: I've watched institutional rules keep people comfortable on the wide path instead of urging them toward actual growth, trading real transformation for a paycheck and staying in the good graces of whatever organization signs it. I'm pro-God and anti-religion at heart, and I didn't want to become part of a system built to manage people instead of transform them.

But that's only half of it. As a younger man, I also didn't want the title because I didn't want to be held to that level of responsibility and accountability, at least not how I understood it then. My understanding has grown, and I still don't want the title, but I'm eager for the responsibility now, and those are two very different things.

I'm really not interested in any title or label outside of *"follower of Jesus."* But dodging every title doesn't remove the responsibility or calling. I've been given a message to share, and that's what I'm going to do. Some of you have trusted me with parts of your walk, and I'm truly honored to hold that trust; and going forward, I'll be more intentional and diligent about stewarding it.

So here's what's actually changing: no more comfortable, soft writing. I'm going to share the message I'm responsible for sharing, plain and unhedged, which means being kind, not nice: truth in love, even when it's uncomfortable, including when it's about me. And practically, it means less message and more updates: pointing you toward the articles, papers, tools, and resources where the real insight lives, instead of trying to cram it all into this email every week. Which leads us to:

Step One

Here's the actual message underneath all of that, the one I keep landing back on: step one is surrender. Not *"believe the right facts about God,"* but actual heart level [surrender](#).

- » Do you trust that God is who He says He is?
- » Do you trust that Jesus actually finished what He said He finished on the cross?

That's it. That's the whole starting line. Everything else: every practice, every habit, every *"should,"* comes after those questions get answered... *honestly*.

And if you can't get there, if surrender feels impossible right now, that's not a moral failure; it's information. It usually means you're operating in survival mode: [self-protection](#), old [wounds](#), old patterns, and a dysregulated nervous system. That's not something you talk yourself out of in a sentence. We need to name it honestly instead of skipping past it, get support where we need it, and let the slow work of healing teach our body it's safe to trust God.

That's the work underneath surrender: knowing yourself, working on yourself, so you can actually hand over your whole heart instead of just the parts that feel safe. He'll meet you exactly where you are, but He'll never leave you where you were. So put in the work, the time, the effort, and trust Him enough to follow Him.

I'm grateful for every one of you who reads this. I truly mean that, and I hope I steward it well, which means I need to hear from you: what's landing, what isn't, where you're stuck, where you disagree, and what's on your heart. Simply reply to this email and tell me. I'm listening.

This Week's Articles

Nothing new was published this week, but if you haven't checked out the [Do Not Fear](#) resource or downloaded the PDF, I encourage you to do so. It's a practical resource designed to help us recognize fear, return to what God has said, and examine what we're trusting when fear begins shaping our response.



[Resource: Do Not Fear](#)

Continue Exploring

Bible References:

- » 1 Peter 5:2-7
- » Proverbs 3:5-6
- » John 19:28-30
- » Luke 9:23-24
- » Philippians 2:12-13
- » Mark 9:21-24
- » Romans 12:1

Read more on:

- » [Trust](#)
- » [Fruit](#)
- » [Surrender](#)
- » [Faith](#)
- » [Heart Posture](#)
- » [Core Wounds](#)
- » [Attachment Styles](#)
- » [Fear](#)

Anchored Prayer

Abba,

I trust You to be who You say You are. I trust that Jesus finished what He came to do. I don't have to earn what He already paid for.

Show me where I'm still trying to protect myself. Where I'm saying I trust You but refusing to let go. Help me be honest about it, and give me the strength to lay it down.

I'm not my own anymore. You bought me with a price. Help me live like I believe that. Help me surrender my heart and actually follow You.

Hallelujah. Amen.

My Prayer:

Anchored Reflection

Take your time with them. Pay attention to where you get uncomfortable, and resist the urge to give the answer you think you're supposed to give. Start with what's honest. Bring that to God.

Do you actually trust God to be who He says He is, or are you still testing Him?

Do you trust that Jesus finished what He said He finished, or are you still trying to finish it yourself?

Where in your life right now are you protecting yourself instead of surrendering?

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:

 [PDF Newsletter Archive](#)



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If this newsletter encouraged you, challenged you, or gave you something worth reflecting on, I'd love to have you join the list. I send these out every Friday morning with honest reflections on faith, healing, growth, and healthier relationships with God, ourselves, and others.

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