

ADDICTION AND GRACE: STEP THREE RICHARD ROHR

“Sweet Surrender” Chapter Three

“The most helpful of the personal stories in AA’s Big Book, is the one entitled “Acceptance is the Answer” (19)

‘Step 3 – on acceptance and surrender is quite succinct and telling. It cuts to the chase – surrender will always feel like dying and yet it is the necessary path to liberation. ‘

It takes each of us a long times just to accept – to accept what is, to accept ourselves, others, and to see that past and our own mistakes and the imperfections and idiosyncrasies of almost everything.

‘Our basic resistance is to life.’

Carl Jung: ‘What we resist, persists.

Jesus taught, ‘offer the wicked no resistance.

Acceptance is not our modes as nearly as much aggression, resentment, fight or flight.

Surrender is not giving up, it is giving to the moment, the event, the person or the situation.

Growth in faith means willingness to trust God more and more, not only in areas of our lives where we are most successful, but also and most significantly at those levels where we are most vulnerable, wounded and weak. (123)

Building trust through repeated risks of faith is no different than any other process of learning.

We learn from experience that God is good because we have risked that God is good. The measure of faith, then, is the degree to which we/one is really willing to risk the truth of grace. (130)

Ironically, freedom becomes most pure when our addictions have so confused and defeated us that we sense no choice left at all. Here, where we feel absolutely powerless, we have the most real power. Nothing is left in us to force us to choose one way or another, our choice then, is a real act of faith. We may put our faith in ourselves and in our attachments or in God, It is that simple. (127)

Here our freedom is always pure and in this purity, faith is always an act of will. But God is not absent; God's grace is more radiant at such times. It's preservation of our freedom becomes most clear when all our other props are taken away...we can pray like the father of the epileptic boy, "I have faith, help my lack of faith." Grace empowers us to choose rightly, but it will not determine that choice. (130)

We will never turn our will and our life over to any kind of God except a loving and merciful one. Why would we?