



# ***REFLECTIONS***

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**In those days Israel had no king; everyone  
did as he saw fit.**

*Judges 21:25*

## **My Greatest Burden**

Managing me is a tough assignment. Maybe a few others will relate to it. Temptations present themselves in abundance every day. Breakfast each day is the first—bacon, toast, or sometimes biscuits. Then there are the daily challenges to keep my tongue from expressing ugly thoughts and to suppress my anger when I don't get my way. In the middle of the day sometimes there are opportunities to waste time—watch TV, hit a few golf balls, or take a quick nap. In the evening there are baked potatoes and dessert trays in place of the exercise routines that would keep me healthy. The only easy thing on any given day is to see what someone else has done wrong.

Yet in many ways, I do a pretty good job. I seldom break the speed limit unless it's safe. I tell the truth except when it might offend someone else; and my deceitful acts are always intended to make the world a better place. All in all, I believe I am a good judge of right and wrong. I use the same rationale others have used over the years.

Eve used the logic when she ate the apple, and not to disappoint his bride, Adam used it too. They found a way to get what they wanted. In other words, they wanted to be like God—and judging my own behavior, it seems that I want that too.

God says, "*Obey me, and I will be your God and you will be my people. Walk in all the ways I command you, that it may go well with you.*" (Jeremiah 7:23-24) But rather than obey God, I act as if I want to *be* god. So managing me is my greatest burden.

I pray to do God's will each day, yet find ways to justify my own wishes in his name. I seem to want what I want when I want it, and unless it will bring harm to others, I generally find ways to justify my own desires. That's what was going on back in the days when Israel had no king. Everyone did as he saw fit. And that seems to be what is going on in my life today. But I *do* have a king.

Jesus came into the world to testify to the truth (John 18:37). That means He has the answers. Yet, while I believe in him, I still find it hard to surrender to him. After all, gods don't surrender. Gods are self-reliant and that is what I seem to want. But surrender does not mean to give up. It means to give over. Surrender means to relinquish *my* judgment of need and *my* urge to control others. Surrender means to conform to the image of Christ and allow him to live through me. Surrender then becomes a victory—a victory that assures obedience.

So, I have changed my prayer. I pray for surrender to be the way I manage me.

*"You are the light of the world."*

*Richard* +

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