

JOURNEY TO FREEDOM HANDBOOK**UNIT I Key 6****SURRENDER****Purpose of this Key:**

- 1) Learn that surrendering self-will is only possible if we are relying on God's mercy in Christ for salvation.
- 2) Recognize that Jesus surrendered everything for us before He called us to surrender everything for Him.
- 3) Learn that surrender is based on faith in the One to Whom we are surrendering.
- 4) Recognize that surrender is a process, not an event, and no one achieves total surrender in this lifetime.
- 5) Recognize that surrender involves facing our fears.
- 6) Recognize that Jesus understands how hard surrender is for us, because when He was on earth it was sometimes hard for Him.

Mark 14:32-42**Common responses:**

- 1) Most people comprehend that Jesus surrendered to the will of His Father.
- 2) Some note the weakness of the disciples by comparison.
- 3) Some note the necessity of a consistent prayer life.

Points to emphasize:

- 1) Jesus was understandably terrified of going to the cross, but He went anyway.
- 2) He took the fear to His Father in prayer.
- 3) Surrender often comes only after a struggle, and giving up control is terrifying. Jesus understands how hard it is for us.
- 4) Jesus was asked to go to the cross, and the disciples were only asked to stay awake for an hour. They missed a chance to pray with Jesus.
- 5) In the book of Acts, we see these same three disciples becoming spiritual powerhouses.
- 6) When on the cross, Jesus focused on the ones He would save (Isaiah 53:11).

- 7) We also will be glad after we have obeyed.
- 8) We need to pray against our weakest points.
- 9) Recognizing our need for God's mercy makes us eager to pray (Hebrews 2:17-18 and 4:15-16).
- 10) Obedience makes us able to participate in the salvation of others.

Philippians 3:4-9

Common responses:

- 1) Most people recognize that our salvation is more important than our own desires.
- 2) Some note that God will return to us anything we give up for Him.

Points to emphasize:

- 1) While we certainly need to surrender our sense of entitlement to possessions and social status, Paul is speaking of something else.
- 2) He once thought he could earn God's favor by working hard to live a good life.
- 3) He even says that he now regards as "rubbish" or "garbage" any righteousness he thought he had gained by keeping the Law.
- 4) Now that Paul recognizes that he is saved only by the mercy of God in Christ, he surrenders all claims to anything else.
- 5) No matter how many good deeds we have done, we are still common sinners in need of God's mercy (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Romans 6:2

Common responses:

- 1) Do not plan to sin, but if you do, repent and get back on track.
- 2) We do not need to obey temptations any more.
- 3) Our sinful nature is still there, but we do not have to let it make our decisions for us.
- 4) Some note that dying to a favorite sin is painful.

Points to emphasize:

- 1) Consider what it means to be dead. The dead cannot see, hear, swallow, take in anything, or respond to anything. One cannot persuade them to a point of view. Their priorities have totally changed, because they are focused on the Lord in heaven, not earthly concerns.
- 2) So should our attitude be towards temptation.
- 3) However, human nature is tempted to try to do both.
- 4) Some sex offenders were committed Christians at the time they were arrested, but they thought they could take little “vacations” from being Christians. Pastors and priests fall into sexual sins for that reason.
- 5) We are all tempted at times to take little “vacations” from being Christians.
- 6) When we are tempted, Jesus holds out His hand to help us (I Corinthians 10:13). His hand has nail-scars that we helped put there, but we are tempted to push it away.
- 7) When tempted, we can **immediately** ask God to defend us.
- 8) When tempted, we always have a choice whether to sin or to pray for help.
- 9) When we stop committing our favorite sin, we often feel as if we are in withdrawal from a drug. Assure them that this feeling is normal and will not go on forever.

Ephesians 2:10

Common responses:

- 1) Our new nature wants to do God’s will.
- 2) God created us to do good works, and He has a plan for our lives.
- 3) Faith without works is dead (James 2:17).
- 4) Some tell how they are already finding ways to serve others.

Points to emphasize:

- 1) The Holy Spirit works on us continually, convicts us of sin, calls us to repentance, exposes the lies of the devil, speaks God’s truth to us through the Word, and enlightens us with His gifts.
- 2) He will do this as long as we live.

- 3) We each have a unique set of gifts from God and are called to use them. Each individual has a unique ministry niche (John 4:36).
- 4) We can best discover our gifts and calling by beginning each day with asking God to show us His will for that day (John 15:4).
- 5) We discover our gifts and calling only after we have received God's mercy in Christ (Ephesians 2:8-9). We gladly do good works out of gratitude for His free gift of salvation, not to earn His favor.
- 6) Reference Matthew 25:14-36, especially verses 21 and 23. The more we use our gifts, the more God will give us (2 Corinthians 9:6-11).
- 7) God is looking for workers to whom He can entrust vulnerable souls.
- 8) We can pray, "Do what You want with me, whatever You like, whatever You have to, whatever it is going to take, to conform me to Your likeness."

1. On a scale of 1-10, how much have you surrendered to the Lord?

Common responses:

- 1) Answers will vary.

Points to emphasize:

- 1) Commend any steps that they have taken to surrender self-will.
- 2) Nobody totally surrenders in this life; surrender is an on-going process.
- 3) Never criticize a low number. Assure them that we all had to start somewhere.
- 4) People who have trouble surrendering may still have legalistic ideas.
- 5) We cannot surrender by our own striving.
- 6) Surrender becomes possible only after we have received salvation by the mercy of God in Christ.
- 7) Be alert to people who think that surrender means seeking perfection under the Law. Legalism did not work for the Galatians (3:1-5) and will not work for us.
- 8) Often when we surrender something significant, we get a period of stability; and then a new challenge in life will call for further surrender.
- 9) We are only as strong as our last victory over a temptation (I Corinthians 10:12).

- 10) Many are just beginning to grasp the idea of the surrendered life. Be aware that both fear and excitement are normal.
- 11) Some might be trying to get ahead of the Holy Spirit, so warn them not to.

2. What makes surrender to the Lord so hard?

Common responses:

- 1) Many are afraid of what will be required.
- 2) Many acknowledge pride, self-will, and their sinful nature.
- 3) Some do not feel close enough to God to trust Him.
- 4) Some realize that surrender means forming many new habits, and sin is all they have ever known.
- 5) To surrender, one must become honest with God and oneself.

Points to emphasize:

- 1) The devil will tell us scary stories. He lies (Romans 8:18).
- 2) The Spirit and the self-will are at war (Romans 8:5-8, Galatians 5:16-17, & I Peter 2:11), and we will feel that struggle until we die.
- 3) Surrender becomes easier as we read the Word, learn more about Jesus, and know to Whom we are surrendering.
- 4) Surrender is contagious. When we accept God's agenda instead of trying to force our own way, we notice that life becomes easier, so we want to surrender more.
- 5) God has a plan, and we just need to ask Him to reveal it (Jeremiah 29:11 & Romans 8:28).
- 6) The surrendered life can lead to persecution (2 Corinthians 11:23-28).

3. What do you think is the hardest thing for you to surrender?

Common responses:

- 1) Answers will vary.
- 2) Some say the ssa/ma/tx lusts and fantasies.
- 3) Some say time management and day-to-day choices.
- 4) Some say the loss of a loved one.

- 5) Some say anger or other emotions.
- 6) Some say their future plans.

Points to emphasize:

- 1) To surrender lusts and fantasies, one needs to learn to stop negative thoughts and fantasies with memorized Scriptures immediately.
- 2) Part of surrender is accepting the feeling of being in withdrawal from an addiction.
- 3) Often we sin in order to cope with anxiety (Hebrews 2:15), and surrender involves facing anxiety or other painful emotions without using our favorite sin for relief.
- 4) The more we surrender our desire for relief and face the negative feelings directly, the stronger we become. Surrender makes us stronger, not weaker.
- 5) Anger and other emotions will not go away by surrendering them directly. Under anger is often pain and fear.
- 6) The work of forgiveness involves surrendering our desires for real or fantasized revenge.
- 7) The loss of a loved one has to be grieved. Grieve in the presence of Jesus, Who knows all about it.
- 8) Surrender becomes self-reinforcing as we see life becoming easier as we obey God's will (Romans 8:28).
- 9) Surrender needs to be daily, hourly, and minutely.
- 10) Surrender means becoming accountable to others, fulfilling obligations, and living as a Christian servant.
- 11) We can send up quick prayers asking God what He wants us to do, how to respond to another person, or even what He wants us to be thinking about at the moment.
- 12) Some may need to learn to distinguish between lust and a normal sex drive.
- 13) As we learn to surrender, we need to be Spirit-led (John 10:3-5, 16, & 27).
- 14) Sometimes the surrendered life means that we allow God to deal with other people in His way and in His time, instead of trying to deal with them our way.

4. How does Ephesians 2:10 apply to you?**Common responses:**

- 1) Answers will vary.
- 2) Some express that these are new ideas, and they are just getting started.
- 3) Many express wanting to live a life that honors and glorifies God.
- 4) Some are beginning to discern their gifts and callings and to feel burdened for the lost.

Points to emphasize:

- 1) Commend whatever steps they have taken to let God have His way in their lives.
- 2) Remind them that the Holy Spirit directs the process, and He will put His hand on what needs to be surrendered next.
- 3) Give encouragement from Hebrews 6:10. We do not surrender our self-will to gain merit from God, but He does promise to remember our works.
- 4) Affirm any gifts they are discerning. They may be in training for a job God has for them. Every job God gives is training for the next job.
- 5) Affirm the uniqueness of each person's gifts and calling. Some can reach people whom no one else would be able to reach.
- 6) God uses people at the bottom of the social scale to do His greatest works, including penitent sex offenders in prison (I Corinthians 1:26-28).

5. How does this verse apply to your battle against ssa/ma/tx?**Common responses:**

- 1) Some recognize that they do not have to give in to temptation any more.
- 2) Some recognize that they do not have to listen to society's messages any more.
- 3) Some recognize that they are not fighting this alone; Jesus with them continually.
- 4) Some foresee becoming able to help others.
- 5) Occasionally someone might discuss marrying someone of the opposite sex some day in the future.

Points to emphasize:

- 1) Commend any good insights.
- 2) Remind them of the need to replace sinful activities with God-pleasing activities.
- 3) Commend any recognition of their gifts and callings.
- 4) God allowed them certain experiences so they would develop those gifts. He can be trusted to continue to train them in their gifts and callings (Philippians 1:6).
- 5) The desire to marry is commendable, but do not emphasize it. The thought of marriage might trigger hidden fears and anxieties.
- 6) Ssa/ma/tx people might become resistant if they think you are pushing them to get married. The goal is holiness, not marriage; and if I Corinthians 7 applies to them, that must be respected.
- 7) They can pray for their future spouse, but let the Lord be the matchmaker. Your job is to be their mentor, not their matchmaker.

6. What is going to help you win the battle according to Galatians 2:20?

Common responses:

- 1) Different points are significant to different people.
- 2) Some focus on the indwelling Christ.
- 3) Some focus on dying to self.
- 4) Some focus on living by faith.

Points to emphasize:

- 1) To be crucified with Christ means one lives a life of on-going repentance, with on-going reliance on the merits of Christ to save us.
- 2) It means a life of self-examination in light of the 10 Commandments, I Corinthians 13, Galatians 5:22-23, I Thessalonians 5:16-22, and others.
- 3) It means we are ready at all times to repent of sins of deeds, words, thoughts, attitudes, fantasies, secret agendas, hidden motivations, pride, deceptive beliefs, or anything the Holy Spirit shines His light upon.
- 4) This verse is a good one to memorize and mediate on.

7. Can you say what the Psalmist says in Psalm 40:8? What might get in the way?

Common responses:

- 1) Answers will vary.
- 2) Most people comprehend that the self-will gets in the way.
- 3) Some wish they could say 'yes' but are still too weak.
- 4) A few are impatient to do God's will.

Points to emphasize:

- 1) Assure them that when they actually carry out God's will, they will feel delight.
God set it up that way.
- 2) When we receive the mercy of God, we become able to obey the will of God
(Romans 6:17 & 21).
- 3) Lies of the devil might rob us of that delight by accusing us of not obeying well enough.
- 4) We would not repent of our sins if God's Law was not written on our hearts
(Romans 2:15).
- 5) God is delighted with us when we take even baby steps under His direction.
- 6) New Christians need much encouragement, because they may have not yet experienced God showing Himself faithful on their behalf.
- 7) Surrender will become easier as they live transparently before God.
- 8) Repentance itself is an act of surrender of self-will.
- 9) More experienced Christians may have accumulated a record of obeying God's will and experiencing blessings as a result.
- 10) Those who are impatient may need to be told not to get ahead of the Holy Spirit.

8. What have you learned about Surrender?**Common responses:**

- 1) Some recognize that spiritual progress depends upon surrender.
- 2) Some recognize that they need to bring every decision to the Lord for His approval.
- 3) Many recognize that surrender must be total, not partial.
- 4) Some are just beginning to realize that surrender is safe.

Points to emphasize:

- 1) We make our lives harder when we refuse to surrender to God's will.
- 2) Commend any steps toward surrender and any good insights.
- 3) As we receive forgiveness of our sins, we become more willing to surrender.
- 4) In His mercy, God brings us to surrender gently (Psalm 23, Matthew 11:29-30).

9. On a scale of 1-10, how victorious have you been lately? Please explain your answer.

(Victory is measured by how much you have overcome temptation.)

Common responses:

- 1) Answers will vary.

Points to emphasize:

- 1) Encourage thanks and praise to God for any victory gained.
- 2) Commend even small victories, because even small victories may have been difficult.
- 3) Assure them that God is pleased even when we take baby steps in obedience to His will.
- 4) If someone has fallen into sin, do not criticize them. Nothing will be gained if they cannot be honest with you. After they have confessed it and accepted God's forgiveness (I John 1:7-9), encourage them to re-trace their steps and ask the Holy Spirit to give them insight into what weakness led to the fall.
- 5) Falling is not the problem; it is staying down when one has fallen. Slips into sin are usually not random; often something sets us up to fall.
- 6) If their numbers are low, and they report very little victory, remind them that they are just beginning.
- 7) Continue to encourage them to use memorized Scripture to block tempting and negative thoughts. Assure them that this will improve with practice.
- 8) If they sin less frequently than before, assure them that is a sign of God at work in their lives. Emphasize progress, not perfection.

- 9) If they view themselves as making very little progress, keep their focus on God's mercy rather than their own failures. Beating themselves up accomplishes nothing; Jesus took the beating on their behalf.
- 10) If their consciences bother them over a sin that did not used to bother them, assure them that is a sign that God is at work in their lives.
- 11) Sin includes not only actions and words, but also ungodly thoughts. Encourage confession of sins of thought (Romans 12:2), which makes it easier to avoid sins of words and deeds.
- 12) If temptation is causing them to lean harder on God, that is a victory in and of itself.
- 13) If their numbers are high, you might tell them that more tests are likely in the future, but such concerns should not prevent them from enjoying their present victories.
- 14) Assure them that God allows tests only when we are ready for them.

10. On a scale of 1-10, how much memory work have you done?

Common responses:

- 1) Answers will vary. The number here often correlates with the number in #9.

Points to emphasize:

- 1) If the number corresponds to the number in #9, point out the correlation.
- 2) Encourage any memorization, especially verses that speak of God's mercy and promises.
- 3) Verses that only condemn sin are not helpful; the most powerful verses give the consolation of the Gospel to the penitent sinner.
- 4) If they are having trouble memorizing, they could write down meaningful verses on paper, and read them several times throughout the day. Some find making flashcards helpful.
- 5) They may be discovering to their surprise that they are able to memorize and are more intelligent than they realized.

- 6) People from backgrounds where education was de-valued often find that as they grow in Christ, their interest in education increases. Encourage them to explore their potential. They may be surprised at what they are capable of.

11. Did you use any memorized Scripture to battle temptation lately? What was the result?

Common responses:

- 1) Answers will vary. This will often reflect the answers in # 9 and #10.
- 2) By this point in the program, most people have a “war story” to tell.

Points to emphasize:

- 1) Encourage using Scripture to battle all temptations, sexual or otherwise. The more they use memorized Scripture to block negative thoughts and attitudes, the more easily they can block other temptations.
- 2) Commend any use of Scripture to battle temptation and encourage them to keep doing so.
- 3) They may have had no significant temptation lately. While they should thank God for that, more temptation will come sooner or later. They need to memorize in order to be prepared.
- 4) If they are not using Scripture to battle temptation, encourage them to confess their sin and start using their sword (Ephesians 6:17).

12. How is your spiritual life in general, how are your private devotions, and how are things at your church/fellowship group?

Common responses:

- 1) Answers will vary.

Points to emphasize:

- 1) Encourage thanks and praise to God for whatever is going well.
- 2) Explore what is not going well and try to help them find out why. If they are not memorizing, that could be part of the reason.

- 3) Give encouragement and be patient as they sort out the many new ideas they have received in such a short time.
- 4) They may need to be taught about prayer and how to read the Bible, and be encouraged to find a good church.
- 5) Make sure that when they read the Bible, they look for evidence of God's mercy in every passage.
- 6) New habits of thought and action take time to learn. They may already be progressing as fast as possible.

13. Is there anything special you would like to talk about?

Common responses:

- 1) Answers will vary.

Points to emphasize:

- 1) Counsel based on your knowledge, experience, and what you have learned from working with this person.

Plan of Action (Read the description of Plans of Action and make your plans as specific as possible.

- 1) Affirm anything that is Biblical.
- 2) Be alert for any hidden legalism.
- 3) Give lots of encouragement. It is hard to change a lot of habits in a short period of time.

Additional points:

- 1) There is joy in surrendering.
- 2) Ssa/ma/tx people often fear that if they surrender, they will end up alone. Reassure them based on Romans 8:28, Jeremiah 29:11, and Joel 2:25.
- 3) Reassure that God never takes anything away that He does not somehow replace (Psalm 16).

- 4) Even penitent child molesters in prison find out that God has a job for them (I Corinthians 1:26-28). There are people whom only they can reach.
- 5) We must learn obedience before God entrusts vulnerable souls to our care.
- 6) If we insist upon following our own ideas, we have no right to be angry when things go badly.
- 7) To be able to surrender, we need to know Jesus, to Whom we are surrendering. He is the Good Shepherd out in the hills searching for His lost sheep (Luke 15:4-7), and the Rabbi who stood between the adulterous woman and the stones of the Pharisees (John 8:3-11). Even in His extreme agony on the cross, He could hear and answer a plea for mercy (Luke 23:42-43).