

JOURNEY TO FREEDOM

UNIT II Key 6 SURRENDER

SCRIPTURE PRINCIPLE: If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me . . . If anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him. John 12:26

You have been forgiven in Christ! So how has surrender been progressing since you started the program? The very fact that you have gotten this far suggests that you have surrendered a certain amount of self-will and have been doing what you felt God called you to do. Before beginning of the program, you were advised to pray and ask God if it was **His** will for you to be in this program, because if you did not feel led by God to do so, you would likely not have gotten this far.

Giving up ssa/ma/tx is much like the experience of the Hebrew tribes when they left Egypt. If you need to, take some time to read the parts of Exodus, Numbers and Deuteronomy that describe the difficulties they had in their journey. They had turned their backs on slavery in Egypt but had also given up the good eating that they remembered enjoying there. The price of freedom became desert heat, shortages of water, rationed food that never varied, and hostile desert tribes. Egypt was behind them, but they had not yet received their farms in the Promised Land.

One of the stages of overcoming ssa/ma/tx parallels the Hebrews' experience in the desert. The pains and pleasures of sin are behind the overcomer, he/she is grateful for the Grace that rescues him/her from the pain of being stuck in his/her sins, and the joy of the mercy received is stronger than the memory of the pleasure. But he/she has not yet gotten to that nice little farm that has been longed for.

In the desert was where God met the Hebrews. He met them in a cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night. When they were defenseless, He placed His angel between them and the swords of their enemies, parted the sea before them, and gave them victory in

battle over enemy tribes that wanted to annihilate them. He met them on His mountain and gave them His Law, which was a gift of mercy to recently emancipated slaves. He taught them how to live as an orderly society and gave them the foundations of what would become a mighty civilization that would bless millions. He had gotten them out of Egypt, and now He worked to get the Egypt out of them.

Sometimes living the surrendered life is like being in a desert. Something has been given up, but the reward has not yet arrived. God meets us in our desert. The Holy Spirit speaks to us through the Word, Holy Communion refreshes us, and in Christ we have victory over sin, death, and the power of the devil. He has forgiven our sins and taken us out of them; now we let Him work to get the sin out of us.

In the desert, we learn to deal with our pain God's way, which feels like heat and thirst and tasteless food. In the desert, He brought truth to the Hebrews, to replace the lies of Egypt; He brings truth to us, to replace the lies of the devil. By faith, we know that God's ways will bring blessings.

The desert is where we see God's mighty acts on our behalf, and where we cry out to Him when overwhelmed. Our desert experience is a time to memorize Scriptures and learn the habit of using them when tempted, a time to realize how ssa/ma/tx filled the empty places in our hearts, and a time to open ourselves up to being filled with the knowledge of God. During this season of life we learn to face our weaknesses without running to the usual sins, learn to discern the lies which we have believed, and learn new ways of relating to others.

When we are in our own personal desert, we need to remember that Jesus first went into the desert on our behalf (Luke 4:1-13). There He did what we could not do: He battled Satan and won. He overcame temptation, confronted the devil's lies, used God's Word as a sword in battle, and made the devil back down. The angels then ministered to Jesus, and He will send them to minister to us as well (Matthew 4:11).

The Bible shows us that the wise people in this world love to live the surrendered life. The more we grow in our knowledge of God, the less we fear surrender, and the more we learn to love it. Without faith in God's mercy, we cling to our self-will no matter how self-destructive it becomes. We lived our lives of sin because we tried to deal with pain our way instead of dealing with it God's way.

To surrender means that we become willing to let God have all of us, to not only deal with our sexuality but also to bring our entire self through the fire of His Grace. We become willing to surrender habits, personality traits, ways of thinking, ways of speaking, prior assumptions, plans for our future, and anything else the Holy Spirit puts His hand upon. The more we surrender self-will, the more we open the door for Him to bless us. He cannot bless us when we demand our own way. He can only bless us on His terms.

We have no reason to be afraid. We know to Whom we are surrendering. We surrender to the Shepherd Who came in search of us, the One Who battled the devil to a standstill in the desert, and the One Who atoned for our sins and won final victory on the cross (I Corinthians 15:56-57). He surrendered all on our behalf, and He will show us the way.

SCRIPTURES: Write out what each of these verse or passages mean to you and your situation.

John 12:46

John 12:26

John 12:36

Titus 3:3-5

STUDY GUIDE

1. On a scale of 1-10, how much have you surrendered to the Lord since you started the program? Please list some of the things you have surrendered and use the back of the page if necessary.
2. What are some things that have been hard to surrender?
3. What has helped you the most to surrender to God's will?
4. What does Proverbs 25:28 say to you?
5. How well are you able to receive constructive feedback from other believers? Please see Proverbs 27:6.

6. What is the reward of the surrendered life? Please see Hebrews 6:10.

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

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

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

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

Plan of Action: (You might prayerfully consider what is in your life that God wants you to surrender next and ask Him what His plan is for you to move forward.)