

## **JOURNEY TO FREEDOM HANDBOOK**

### **UNIT V Key 6**

### **SURRENDER**

#### **Purpose of this Key:**

- 1) Understand that living the surrendered life sometimes means accepting pain.
- 2) Understand that in spite of their best efforts, sometimes broken relationships will not be repaired in this life.
- 3) Understand that sometimes God gives His followers hard assignments.
- 4) Understand that obedience will be blessed and rewarded.
- 5) Learn to become stronger during periods of spiritual dryness.
- 6) Understand that intercessory prayer for a situation might result in it becoming worse, because prayer stirs things up at the spiritual level.
- 7) Discern when the enemy of their souls is striking back in response to their prayers.
- 8) Be encouraged to persevere in prayer.

#### John 16:33b

#### **Common responses:**

- 1) Trouble is normal in the life of a Christian, but Jesus is on our side.
- 2) Overcoming a habitual sin is never easy.
- 3) The environment, our sinful human nature, and the devil will all strike back.
- 4) We need to stay focused on Jesus so we can keep our joy during troubles.
- 5) Jesus has achieved the victory on our behalf even when we cannot see it.
- 6) Even when things seem to be going wrong, God is in control.
- 7) We need to focus on obeying God's will and let Him handle everything.

#### **Points to emphasize:**

- 1) Affirm any Biblical response.
- 2) Refer to I John 4:4 and 5:4.
- 3) These are good verses to memorize for when we need encouragement.

- 4) These verses can also give us encouragement when we recall painful memories from our pasts.
- 5) Every time we have difficulties, we need to ask God how to carry out His will in them.
- 6) If we continue to obey God's will, we are walking in victory even though we may not feel as if we are.

#### Deuteronomy 33:27

##### **Common responses:**

- 1) God is our refuge.
- 2) God is our dwelling place, not this planet.
- 3) He destroys our sinful habits.
- 4) God can handle every problem we have and give us peace.
- 5) We can stand strong against temptation and difficulties.
- 6) God is greater than the devil.

##### **Points to emphasize:**

- 1) Affirm any Biblical response.
- 2) Refer to Psalm 46:1-3.
- 3) These are good verses to memorize for when we need encouragement.
- 4) People are not the enemy; the lies of the devil are the enemy to be destroyed (1 John 3:8 & Ephesians 6:12).

#### Acts 14:22

##### **Common responses:**

- 1) Christians live in a hostile world. We can only be comfortable in this life if we compromise with the world system.
- 2) The early Church members gave each other encouragement.
- 3) The Apostle Paul had just been stoned (Acts 14:19), but he went right on proclaiming the Gospel.
- 4) Trials and tests expose our sins so we can repent of them and be purified.
- 5) The Apostle Paul endured hardship so he could spread the Gospel.

**Points to emphasize:**

- 1) “Prosperity theology” is wrong. The Christian walk is not an easy life.
- 2) People who believe in “prosperity theology” often lose their faith when they have difficulties in life.
- 3) The people who give up the most to follow Jesus value Him the most.
- 4) The more we do to spread the Gospel, the more tribulations we are likely to have.
- 5) Also, the rewards are greater.
- 6) Sometimes the devil knows before we do that God is planning to do a mighty work through us. We might experience unexpected difficulties because the devil wants to prevent us from doing the work God has planned for us.
- 7) The Apostle Paul had the joy of seeing many come to faith in Jesus as a result of his preaching.
- 8) He wrote several Epistles, which have been read by millions of people during the last 2000 years. He wrote some of them in prison, which lacked modern sanitation and ventilation and where he was surrounded by other Christians waiting to be fed to lions.
- 9) The tribulations we go through will serve some useful purpose.
- 10) If we remain faithful in the midst of our trials and tests, we have gotten victory.

Acts 17:1-6**Common responses:**

- 1) Like Jason, we can expect a hostile response if we follow Jesus.
- 2) When we spread the Gospel, some will accept the message and others will slander us.
- 3) The Gospel stirs people up.

**Points to emphasize:**

- 1) Affirm any Biblical response.
- 2) Some people will accept the Gospel, some will resent it, and many who resent it will not be able to explain in rational terms why they so strongly resent it.
- 3) Sometimes we are persecuted because we did something right, not because we did something wrong (I Peter 3:13-17 & 4:12-16).

- 4) Living the surrendered life may lead to persecution (I Peter 2:19-23).
- 5) The Gospel irritates people who have guilty consciences.
- 6) When the Gospel seems ineffective, not much happens; but when people start to accept the Gospel, the devil strikes back.

#### John 17:14-16

##### **Common responses:**

- 1) Christians are not of this world.
- 2) The world will be hostile toward us as we spread the Gospel.
- 3) The secular world believes lies, and the Gospel tells the truth.
- 4) Jesus prayed for His followers to stand strong.

##### **Points to emphasize:**

- 1) Jesus was only hours away from the cross when He prayed this prayer; He was focused on us, not Himself.
- 2) John 17 is called the “High Priestly Prayer”. It was Jesus’ last prayer on behalf of His Church before the crucifixion.
- 3) Jesus’ Gospel is counter-cultural. Jesus will not remove us from the world, but He will help us through our trials and tests.

#### Matthew 28:19-20

##### **Common responses:**

- 1) We are to look for opportunities to witness.
- 2) Some will reject the Gospel, and some will accept it.
- 3) If we are going to spread the Gospel, we need to be surrendered to God’s will.
- 4) He will always be with us.

##### **Points to emphasize:**

- 1) We can ask God every morning how He wants us to spend our day. We can update this prayer every hour or even every five minutes if necessary.
- 2) God will lead us into our path of ministry one step at a time as we obey His will.

- 3) Emphasize that Jesus goes before us always.

1. Would you do God's will if you knew all the facts? Why or why not?

**Common responses:**

- 1) Some say "yes". They would be able to prepare themselves for the obstacles and would know the outcome in advance.
- 2) Some say that they already know what they need to know for now, and the rest will be revealed as they continue to obey God's will and walk by faith.
- 3) Some say that if they knew all the facts, they would be too overwhelmed.
- 4) Some emphasize the need to walk by faith without knowing all of God's will.

**Points to emphasize:**

- 1) We hesitate to obey God's will because we are afraid.
- 2) If we could see in advance the blessings of obedience, we would willingly obey.
- 3) We are not safe if we step out from under God's will.
- 4) If we are not in His will, we cannot ask for His help.
- 5) Affirm walking by faith, not by sight (II Corinthians 5:7).
- 6) If we knew all the facts, we would see the end results (Romans 8:18 & 28, & Jeremiah 29:11), and like Jesus, we would see the joy set before us (Hebrews 12:2 & Isaiah 53:11).
- 7) The longer we walk with the Lord and surrender our self-will, the more opportunities we will have to see how God uses the worst seasons of our lives.
- 8) When difficulties come, we can look for God to make use of them.
- 9) Refer to Psalm 30:5 and 126:5-6.

2. Are there any situations in your life in which things are difficult through no fault of your own, and it may be a test? Has the devil's empire struck back at you? Please describe what it is and how you are responding.

**Common responses:**

- 1) Some are being treated unjustly by others.
- 2) Some have opportunities and challenges, but their lack of self-confidence makes it hard to move forward.

- 3) Some are still coping with memories of a painful past.
- 4) Some have resisted fierce temptations and are glad they did.
- 5) Most have learned to get into prayer and the Word when tested, and look for what use God will make of the situation.

**Points to emphasize:**

- 1) Affirm reliance on prayer and the Word.
- 2) When God is done testing us, then He often entrusts us with bigger assignments.
- 3) We should not condemn ourselves for having painful memories. Many ssa/ma/tx overcomers come from backgrounds of pain; until they come before our Lord in Heaven, they may suffer from memories of abuse the rest of their lives.
- 4) Some are in situations where every decision, however small, needs to be taken to the Lord in prayer. Encourage them to ask the Holy Spirit to lead them through their situations one step at a time.
- 5) Refer to Isaiah 54:17.
- 6) Counsel based on your knowledge, experience, and what you have learned from working with this person.

3. If Jesus had been constantly tempted with ssa/ma/tx temptations, what do you suppose He would have done?

**Common responses:**

- 1) He would have rebuked the devil with Scripture like He did in the wilderness.
- 2) He would have quoted Scripture, gone to the Father in prayer, and relied on the Holy Spirit to empower Him to overcome.
- 3) He would have removed Himself from the tempting situation.

**Points to emphasize:**

- 1) Affirm any Biblical response.
- 2) Assure them that at least once in His earthly life, Jesus must have faced these temptations (Hebrews 2:17-18 & 4:15-16). He knows just how overcomers feel.

- 3) The devil must have been tempting Jesus at every opportunity; he wanted to disqualify Jesus from saving the world (Luke 4:13).
- 4) Every second that Jesus was on the cross, He must have been tempted to get off it.

4. How does Psalm 19:13 apply to your life? Have you ever suddenly slipped into a sin because the temptation totally blindsided you and you did not see it coming? What did you do afterwards about it? Please share.

**Common responses:**

- 1) They repented, sought God's guidance, and made plans of action to avoid slipping into the same sin again.
- 2) Some made amends where they could.
- 3) They spent a lot of time in prayer about it.

**Points to emphasize:**

- 1) Affirm any Biblical response:
- 2) Remind them that I John 1:9 always applies, as does Romans 8:1.
- 3) God allows temptations to make us aware of our weaknesses and to make us stronger.
- 4) Encourage them to use the Emergency Prayer when blindsided by sudden temptation.
- 5) We need to be aware that the devil always watches for an opportunity to attack (I Peter 5:8).
- 6) If we repent of our sins and try to make amends, the devil still has not won.

5. What specific temptations of deeds, words, thoughts, attitudes, sexual and other fantasies, secret agendas, hidden motivations, pride, self-deception, and self-will, do you still deal with?

**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.

6. What are some characteristics of self-surrender that you are showing in your life?**Common responses:**

- 1) Most take difficult situations before the Lord and ask Him what He wants them to do.
- 2) Some acknowledge that this requires patience.
- 3) Most rely on the Word to tell them what is right.

**Points to emphasize:**

- 1) Affirm any Biblical response.
- 2) Encourage thanks and praise to God. They have come a long, long ways by now.

7. Which of the following statements best describe how well you are living the surrendered life?

Please describe your answer.

**Common responses:**

- 1) Most have made great progress.
- 2) Many have learned to begin each day asking God to reveal His will for that day.
- 3) Many have learned to stop themselves when they are thinking ungodly thoughts.
- 4) Many express that they feel free and at peace when they obey God's will. Trying to control every part of their lives was a heavy burden.
- 5) Some have areas of their lives that are still difficult to surrender.

**Points to emphasize:**

- 1) Affirm their progress. None of it was easy, but the sense of freedom makes it all worthwhile.
- 2) The surrendered life eventually becomes self-reinforcing, because it gives a sense of freedom.
- 3) Striving to push our own agendas under our own self-will is stressful and exhausting.
- 4) Refer to Romans 6:17 & 21.
- 5) If they express difficulties, counsel based on your knowledge, experience, and what you have learned from working with this person.

8. What Scriptures give you the greatest encouragement to surrender?

**Common responses:**

- 1) Answers will vary.

**Points to emphasize:**

- 1) Affirm any Biblical response.

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

**Common responses:**

- 1) Most have seen positive results.
- 2) By this time, going to Scripture and prayer has become an automatic reflex.

**Points to emphasize:**

- 1) Affirm the power of the Word to block temptation.
- 2) Counsel based on your knowledge, experience, and what you have learned from working with this person.

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

**Common responses:**

- 1) Most report that things are going well.
- 2) Some are going through personal struggles or seeing problems at church.
- 3) Sometimes they see problems at church because they have become more discerning of bad doctrines.

**Points to emphasize:**

- 1) Encourage thanks and praise to God for whatever is going well.
- 2) Never criticize any difficulties that they confess.
- 3) Counsel based on your knowledge, experience, and what you have learned from working with this person.

Plan of Action

- 1) Affirm any Biblical response.
- 2) Counsel based on your knowledge, experience, and what you have learned from working with this person.
- 3) Give lots of encouragement for any valid ideas on how to make changes.
- 4) Encourage confessing sin and receiving forgiveness where they identify a need to make changes.

**Additional Points:**

- 1) Once we realize that we are gaining freedom from and victory over a besetting sin, we want more and more of what God has in mind for us. So we examine ourselves even more thoroughly, enthusiastically longing to be purged of everything that could stand in the way of our relationship with Jesus.
- 2) We become pre-occupied with walking a path of obedience and making the most of all our resources to live for Jesus.
- 3) But we can forget to notice beautiful, delightful, appealing things along the way.
- 4) Life is full of things to be enjoyed. Conversations, people, scenery, and the company of loved ones are all good gifts to be enjoyed.
- 5) When Jesus was walking along the roads of Galilee with His disciples, did they always speak only of matters pertaining to the Kingdom?
- 6) Did they ever joke around, laugh, enjoy the sights of bird and flowers, or just enjoy each others' company? The Gospels do not tell us.
- 7) Psalm 16 tells us that the lines have fallen for us in pleasant places, that our heritage is beautiful, that our hearts are made glad when we set the Lord before us, and that in His right hand are pleasures forever.
- 8) If sexual sins and chemicals were our only sources of enjoyment, and we have given those up, we need to replace our sins with beautiful and enjoyable things.
- 9) Life is full of harmless pleasures that are here for us to enjoy.