

JOURNEY TO FREEDOM

UNIT V Key 6 SURRENDER

SCRIPTURE PRINCIPLE: In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world. John 16:33b

Sometimes living the surrendered life means accepting pain.

Sometimes a relationship is broken, and we do what we can to mend it. We repent of our own sins, ask for forgiveness for our part in it, forgive the other one for their part in it, practice the ways of love toward the other person, reach out repeatedly, and the only result is continued hostility and rejection. Sometimes the surrendered life means accepting our helplessness in the face of their hostility and rejection.

Sometimes someone has committed a sin against us that left us with permanent physical and medical impairments. Those are unlikely to go away in this life. Living the surrendered life means agreeing to live with those impairments.

Sometimes living the surrendered life means accepting a tough assignment. Sometimes it means living and speaking a good witness in difficult circumstances. Sometimes it means plowing in hard soil. Sometimes it means staying in a situation that you would prefer to leave; sometimes it means leaving a situation where you would prefer to remain.

The surrendered life sometimes means taking the long-range view. Sometimes we are called upon to pray for the salvation of someone, and he/she does not repent until he/she is on his/her deathbed. Sometimes we commit ourselves to prayer for a revival in our church, and two generations go by before it breaks out. Many Christians in America are pleading with God for revival in our country, not knowing if we will ever see it in our lifetime, while our society continues to become more divided and conflicted.

Sometimes it seems as if troubles are coming at us like water out of a high-pressure hose. We feel as if we can barely keep up with the drama unfolding around us. We feel as if we do not get a chance to catch our breath before another explosion disrupts our world.

Surrendering in such circumstance is not without its rewards. We will be forced at times to lean harder and harder on the Lord. Sometimes He will make His presence felt; other times we will feel as if we are alone. But feeling alone is only a deception, a lie of the enemy of our souls. While we may feel as if we are alone, we are never truly alone.

The true test of our faith is in how we conduct ourselves during our periods of spiritual dryness, when God seems to have abandoned us and our good works and faithful prayers do not seem to be causing even a ripple in the pond. Such episodes will come and go throughout all of our lives, and will sometimes last for a long time. Will we continue to obey God's will, remain in the Word, pray when we do not even feel listened to, and wait on the Lord when nothing seems to be happening?

Those who persevere will be rewarded. God will always use the surrendered believer. He will not waste our lives if we are willing to be used by Him. As long as we ask Him to show us His plan and how we can obey His will, He will have a job for us. No believer is without gifts and talents, and burying them in the ground is never an option.

The difficulties we are facing, especially in relationships with others, may not even be a result of or influenced by any sin in our lives. They may be the result of something we are doing right. If we are in prayer for the salvation of another person, and that relationship seems to have become worse instead of better, we should not be surprised. When we pray for people to be saved, when we pray for revival in our churches, neighborhoods, prison yards, schools, or places of employment, a time of upheaval and chaos might happen before we begin to see people coming to Jesus. Praying for others to be saved is like poking a stick into a hornets' nest, and sometimes we are the ones who get stung.

We should not be surprised when the devil's empire strikes back. We should take that as a sign that we are obeying God's will. If we can find no sin of ours that led to the problems, and no other reasons can be found for the conflicts raging around us, we should consider the possibility that our prayers are stirring things up. Pray on!

SCRIPTURES: Write what each of these verses or passages means to you and your situation.

John 16:33b

Deuteronomy 33:27

Acts 14:22

Acts 17:1-6

John 17:14-16

Matthew 28:19-20

STUDY GUIDE (Feel free to write on the backside or use additional paper if necessary.)

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

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.

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

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, and use the back of the sheet if necessary.

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?

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

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

_____ My life is not any better now than when I began the program.

_____ There are some things I do not see the need to surrender.

_____ There are some things I just cannot seem to surrender.

_____ The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.

_____ I feel myself becoming more willing to obey every day.

_____ I sincerely surrender my will to the Lord every day.

_____ My life has changed drastically since I began the program.

_____ I have experienced the joy of obedience and do not want to give it up.

Please explain your answer:

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

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: