

JOURNEY TO FREEDOM

UNIT I Key 6 SURRENDER

SCRIPTURE PRINCIPLE: I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship (Romans 12:1).

Paul is calling on us to live the surrendered life. As we confess our sins to God, we are acknowledging that our way was wrong and that His way is right. As we confess our sins, we often deal with them as individual actions and tempting events. We also confess our sins **after** they have been committed. What about surrendering our self-will altogether, **before** we find ourselves in a situation that God never told us to get into in the first place, and where we have no business being?

The Epistles frequently tell us that the Spirit and the self-will are at war. This war will go on until we die and come before our Lord in Heaven. What does it mean to surrender our self-will and live the surrendered life?

The opposite of self-surrender is making great plans, demanding God give them His stamp of approval, and trying to manipulate God into doing things our way. True self-surrender is not pretending to surrender and then hoping that God will reward you by letting you have your way after all. Nor does it mean giving in to every request made of you by other people, including in the Church. Many Christians are frustrated because they sincerely wanted to do great things for the Lord; so they made some plans or let others make plans for them, and then they wonder why everything went wrong.

The surrendered life means getting up in the morning and asking God, “What is my Lord’s will for me this day?” It means praying before taking on a project, whether it was your idea or someone else’s. It means shooting up a quick prayer and asking God how **He**

wants you to respond when someone says something hostile or challenging. It means becoming alert to your gifts and calling and then living accordingly.

The surrendered life is frightening at times. Things can and do appear to go wrong, but only from our point of view. From God's point of view, events may be right on schedule. In John 11, Jesus arrives at Lazarus' grave 4 days after Lazarus had died. By all outward appearances, Jesus had made a mistake; but in reality, it was all part of His plan to display God's power. A Gospel song about the raising of Lazarus from the dead includes a line that says, "Even when He's 4 days late, He's still right on time".

The surrendered life means that we look for the hand of God when events appear to go wrong. About 100 years ago, a poor young man from Norway saved up all his money to buy a ticket so he could immigrate to America. He sailed from Oslo, Norway, to Liverpool, England, where he had to change ships. Then he discovered that he had lost his ticket. He frantically searched everywhere, but it was nowhere to be found. Imagine his emotional state as he stood on the dock, watching that big, beautiful ship sailing to America without him.

Imagine his emotional state again, several days later, when he learned that the big, beautiful ship that was going to take him to America had struck an iceberg and gone to the bottom of the Atlantic, taking over 1500 people down with it. The ship was the Titanic, and as a male in the 3rd class, his chances of survival would have been very low.

(He eventually got to America, bought a ranch and a herd of cattle in South Dakota, and died at a very old age. This story was told to the author by the rancher's veterinarian.)

The surrendered life means that when disaster strikes, a Christian can look for hidden blessings. Sometimes a disaster is a firewall of protection against even worse disasters. At first we accept by faith that all things work together for good; and as one learns to live the surrendered life, faith increasingly becomes sight as we develop a solid record of God blessing us in wonderful ways as we remain under His will.

We may appear to succeed at living according to our own will for a long time, before God brings us to conviction. He has no obligation to protect us when we step out from under His will. The center of His will, the palm of His hand, is the safest place in the universe.

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

Mark 14:32-42

Philippians 3:4-9

Romans 6:2

Ephesians 2:10

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

1. On a scale of 1-10, how much have you surrendered to the Lord (1 is the lowest, 10 is the highest)?
2. What makes surrender to the Lord so hard?

3. What do you think is the hardest thing for you to surrender?
4. How does Ephesians 2:10 apply to you?
5. How does this verse apply to your battle against ssa/ma/tx?
6. What is going to help you win the battle according to Galatians 2:20?
7. Can you say what the Psalmist says in Psalm 40:8? What might prevent you?
8. What have you learned about Surrender?
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.)

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

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

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

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

Plan of Action: (Read the handout Plan of Action and make plans as specific as possible.)