



Surrender - Part I

Bible Study

[Please provide: Bibles and copies of pages 1-2 for attendees, pages 3-4 for the leader.]

How has life been treating you lately – financially, physically, regarding relationships?

Are you struggling to keep your head above water? Are you floating on the clouds? Or are you just living a day-to-day, rather uneventful life?

Take a moment and jot down your uppermost concern today. (You can use code words if you want to keep it private.)

Webster's Dictionary defines surrender: To give up, abandon or relinquish; to resign in favor of another or to give oneself up into the power of another, to submit or yield.

On February 2, 2005, as Aletha Voges, the author of this study, was preparing to lead an LWML Bible Study on "Peace," she read Romans 8:6: *The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace* (NIV). She thought that a great question to ask the ladies was, "How does one's mind become controlled by the Spirit?" Reflecting upon this question herself, she could not help but be reminded that a life controlled by the Spirit continually surrenders to our Lord's good and gracious will. And led by the Holy Spirit, she would continue to be reminded that she would be used by God as He saw fit.

Aletha's life took a drastic turn as three days later her husband Ethan began his 15-month battle with pancreatic cancer. She was allowed to witness to God's miraculous workings as the Holy Spirit led her to surrender and trust in her God who did not work in ways she always wanted, but according to His purpose.

Aletha states, "It was a humbling experience to let go of my wants and desires and see God take them away and replace them with His will and purpose for my life. It felt like I was walking in two different worlds. In one I was dealing with Ethan's roller coaster medical issues and in the other I was allowed to see how God was using our experiences to His glory."

What relationship would you need to have with someone in order for you to surrender to their will? (Possible answers)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Let's look closely at three possible attitudes. How is God calling us to live in these passages?

Humility – thinking more highly of others than self – submissive

- 2 Chronicles 7:14 _____
- Psalm 25:9 _____

- Psalm 149:4 _____
- Proverbs 3:34 _____
- Ephesians 4:2 _____
- James 4:7-10 _____

Trust – to depend on, rely on, or entrust your will to someone else, surrender
 What do we learn from these examples for our lives?

- Genesis 12:1-8 _____
- Genesis 22:1-18 _____
- Daniel 3:16-18 _____
- Daniel 6:10, 25-27 _____
- Matthew 26:38-39, 42 _____

Faith – believing what is unseen, trusting what may not be felt
 How can these passages enrich our lives lived out in faith?

- Matthew 9:20-22 _____
- Matthew 9:2 _____
- Luke 17:5-6 _____
- Romans 1:16-17 _____
- 2 Corinthians 5:7 _____
- Hebrews 11:13 _____

Where is your faith focused? By the power of the Holy Spirit are you looking upward to God and outward to others with trust in God to work good things in the midst of devastating problems? Or are you inwardly focused on only what you can do?

1 Peter 5:6-7 reminds us to humble (submit, surrender) yourselves, to be lifted up, to cast your cares on God because He cares about you.

Prayer: Lord, we confess that we do not always come to You first with our problems. We try to handle them by ourselves. May the Holy Spirit strengthen our faith and trust in You that we willingly relinquish our will to You. May our life reflect Your love, O Lord, and may others see You in us and glorify our Father in Heaven. Amen.

Surrender – Part 1
 Written by Aletha Voges, Kent, Washington
 Published by Lutheran Women’s Missionary League, 2017



Surrender - Part I

Leader's Guide
Bible Study

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What relationship would you need to have with someone in order for you to surrender to their will? (Possible answers)

1. humble – submissive attitude
2. trust – letting go and letting someone else lead
3. faith – believe someone else has the best interest for your welfare

Let's look closely at three possible attitudes. How is God calling us to live in these passages?

Humility – thinking more highly of others than self – submissive

- 2 Chronicles 7:14 humble selves, submit, surrender, seek God's face
- Psalm 25:9 leads (guides) humble – teaches them
- Psalm 149:4 Lord delights, takes pleasure ... adorns with salvation

- Proverbs 3:34 grace to the humble
- Ephesians 4:2 be humble and gentle, etc.
- James 4:7-10 humble self before the Lord

Trust – to depend on, rely on, or entrust your will to someone else, surrender
What do we learn from these examples for our lives?

- Genesis 12:1-8 Abram left all he knew and followed God to an unknown promised land. He trusted God to lead.
- Genesis 22:1-18 Abraham was tested to sacrifice his only son Isaac. He trusted that God knew what He was doing. Example of Jesus' ultimate sacrifice.
- Daniel 3:16-18 Three men in fiery furnace. Surrendered lives to God because they trusted His faithfulness.
- Daniel 6:10; 25-27 Daniel in lion's den. Trusted God would protect him from the lions.
- Matthew 26:38-39, 42 Jesus, in the Garden of Gethsemane, trusted His Father's plan all the way to the cross.

Faith – believing what is unseen, trusting what may not be felt
How can these passages enrich our lives lived out in faith?

- Matthew 9:20-22 Prayer of faith healed. Do we have this kind of faith?
- Matthew 9:2 Whose faith did Jesus notice? Pray for others to be healed.
- Luke 17:5-6 Increase our faith.
- Romans 1:16-17 In what do we place our faith?
- 2 Corinthians 5:7 We live by faith, not by what we see.
- Hebrews 11:13 We may never see the final results of our prayers, but, God is working on His time schedule. Heaven is our home.

Where is your faith focused? By the power of the Holy Spirit are you looking upward to God and outward to others with trust in God to work good things in the midst of devastating problems? Or are you inwardly focused on only what you can do?

1 Peter 5:6-7 reminds us to humble (submit, surrender) yourselves, to be lifted up, to cast your cares on God because He cares about you.

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Surrender – Part 1
Leader's Guide
Written by Aletha Voges, Kent, Washington
Published by Lutheran Women's Missionary League, 2017



Surrender – Part 2

Bible Study

[Please provide: Bibles and copies of pages 5-8 for attendees, pages 9-13 for the leader. If possible before beginning this study, ask participants to read Job 1-42.]

In Part 1 of this study we looked at what it means to surrender our will as God works His will in our lives. We studied what impact humility, trust, and faith play in our lives as we, by the power of the Holy Spirit, surrender all to Christ.

Surrendering our life to Christ does not mean life is without difficulties. In this part of the study we will look at Job, a man of God, to whom God allowed disaster to strike.

Prayer: Lord, we all have broken areas in our lives. We confess these to You and ask that, as we walk with Job and see how You worked in his life, the Holy Spirit would strengthen our faith and our trust in You. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

Read Job 1. God and Satan had a conversation and Job's life was changed forever. What calamities did Job face?

What might your reaction be if you had to face any or all of the calamities Job experienced?

Any one of them might do us in – financial ruin, loss of prestige, loss of family – and yet Job persisted in faith. Have you had a time when you doubted God was interested in your well-being? How did it turn out?

Read Job 2:1-10. God and Satan had another conversation.

Did God inflict evil upon Job? Does God inflict evil on us? See Job 2:6.

Read Romans 5:1-5 and Romans 8:1, 28, 31-39. When we experience troubles and evil in our lives, how does God use these experiences for our benefit?

God allowed Satan to inflict pain on Job's body, but told Satan that he must spare Job's life. According to verse 9, what did Job's wife encourage him to do in the midst of his pain?

What was Job's response? _____

What does Job's response to his wife say about his faith in God?

Think about a challenging time in your life.

How did (do) these challenges affect you physically? _____

How did (do) these challenges affect you spiritually? _____

What have you done or are you doing to try to fix the situation? _____

Read Job 2:11-13. According to these verses, how did Job's friends Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar initially come to help him in his time of suffering? _____

As these three friends continued to spend time with Job, they each came to some interesting conclusions concerning Job's suffering. Read Job 4:7-9; Job 8:11-13, and Job 11:13-20. Summarize what Job's three friends concluded as to why he faced so many troubles. _____

The advice Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar gave to Job was not only distressing, it is against the truth of Holy Scripture. How does the Bible rightly explain God's intentions for us in each of the references below?

Genesis 50:15-21: _____

Psalms 9:9-12: _____

John 9:1-3: _____

James 1:2-4, 12-18: _____

Read Job 7. Which of Job's feelings described in this chapter are similar to ones you have felt when you have suffered? _____

Job did not understand why God was allowing such suffering to befall him. Yet through it all, Job held on to one eternal truth. Read Job 19:25-27. What is that truth?

How can remembering the truth of Job 19:25-27 anchor us in our own times of suffering?

Jesus, our true Friend and true Savior, fully understands our feelings when we suffer. Read Luke 22:39-40 and 22:63-65. What was the source of Jesus' suffering? _____

Despite His dread, what does Jesus pray to His heavenly Father (Luke 22:42)? _____

How does God respond to Jesus' suffering (verse 43)? _____

What does Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane show you about what our response can be in times of suffering? _____

As He suffered, Job bombarded God with questions. Then God came to Job and asked him questions that Job could not answer.

Read Job 38-41. What do God's questions to Job reveal about God and why we can trust Him to help us in any time of need? _____

Read Job 42:1-9. Job confessed his lack of understanding of God's might and mercy. God led Job to recognize that he was but a man and that God alone is all-knowing and all-powerful. The Holy Spirit worked in Job's heart and led him to repent. Why is repentance such an important element in Job's surrender to God as well as in our own surrender to Him? _____

John writes in 1 John 1:9: *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Cleansed and forgiven by God, what was Job now freed to do? _____

What joy or peace do we miss when we stubbornly hold onto our will instead of surrendering to God that His Kingdom may come among us? _____

Read James 4:7-10. What does God promise us when we surrender ourselves to Him?

God did not leave Job destitute. Read Job 42:10-17. How did God bless Job in his later years? _____

Read Revelation 21:3-4. What does God promise all believers no matter what suffering we might experience during our life here on earth? _____

A final thought: Aletha Voges, the author of this study, walked with her husband Pastor Ethan Voges through his 15-month battle with pancreatic cancer. After much suffering, God took Pastor Voges to his eternal home in heaven. Aletha concludes, “Had I not, through the power of the Holy Spirit, surrendered my will to be used as God saw fit, the outcome of my husband Ethan’s 15-month battle with pancreatic cancer would not have changed, but I would have missed seeing the power of God working in our lives. I would not be living with the peace I now have. I look back and remember how it felt like I was living in two different worlds. The one included the day-to-day struggles of Ethan’s illness. The other, a view of God working in our lives and in the lives of others touched by our experiences. One day while reading Daniel 2:22, I found these words, ... *he [God] reveals deep and hidden things*. As I read and pondered His Word, God helped me see His hidden messages through the struggles we faced. God has given me the privilege to share with others the insights He has given me. God did not answer my prayers as I wanted. He had a better plan. I now live in forgiveness by the power of the Holy Spirit helping me as I struggle to continue living in surrender to Christ.”

Think about your own times of suffering. How has God worked through these times to strengthen your faith in Him and to enable you to help others in their own suffering?

Prayer: Lord God, You know the difficulties each of us is facing today. Many times we try to solve the problems on our own first before coming to You. Forgive us for not coming to You with even our most finite issues. Help us to daily surrender our will to Your will and to walk step-by-step with You leading us. Through faith in Jesus, our once suffering and now triumphant Savior, we trust You to lead us to our ultimate destination, life in heaven with You. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.



Surrender – Part 2

Leader's Guide
Bible Study

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Read Job 1. God and Satan had a conversation and Job's life was changed forever. What calamities did Job face? Job lost his animals, his servants, and his sons and daughters.

What might your reaction be if you had to face any or all of the calamities Job experienced? Encourage participants to share their reactions.

Any one of them might do us in – financial ruin, loss of prestige, loss of family – and yet Job persisted in faith. Have you had a time when you doubted God was interested in your well-being? How did it turn out? If participants feel uncomfortable sharing their times of doubt out loud, encourage them to **think** about such times as well as the outcome of these times.

Read Job 2:1-10. God and Satan had another conversation.

Did God inflict evil upon Job? Does God inflict evil on us? See Job 2:6. Satan and the consequences of our sins are what cause us pain. God allows these times of suffering in our life.

Read Romans 5:1-5 and Romans 8:1, 28, 31-39. When we experience troubles and evil in our lives, how does God use these experiences for our benefit? Romans 5:3-5 tells us that *suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope* – the sure and certain hope we have in God's forgiveness of our sins and eternal life through faith in Christ Jesus. Because of God working in us to help us through our suffering and to bring about good things, we can even *rejoice in our sufferings* (verse 3). The verses from Romans 8 remind us that those in Christ have *no condemnation* (verse 1); *that for those who love God all things work together for good* (verse 28); and *nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

God allowed Satan to inflict pain on Job's body, but told Satan that he must spare Job's life. According to verse 9, what did Job's wife encourage him to do in the midst of his pain? Job's wife told him to *curse God and die.*

What was Job's response? Job feels there is nothing he can do. He does not sin against God.

What does Job's response to his wife say about his faith in God? Job does not blame God for his suffering.

Think about a challenging time in your life.

How did (do) these challenges affect you physically? Challenges can affect our physical health through headaches, joint and neck stiffness, tension, and pain, digestive issues, hives and rashes, as well as various nervous system issues.

How did (do) these challenges affect you spiritually? Challenges can cause us to doubt God's goodness and love toward us. They can make us angry with God. They can make us not want to spend time with Him and even to turn away from Him completely in hopelessness.

What have you done or are you doing to try to fix the situation? As individuals share, point out that solutions not focused on God and on His will for us bring only temporary relief if any relief at all.

Read Job 2:11-13. According to these verses, how did Job's friends Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar initially come to help him in his time of suffering? At first, Job's friends came to *show him sympathy and comfort him* (verse 11); they mourned with him over his losses (verse 12); and they stayed with him (verse 13).

As these three friends continued to spend time with Job, they each came to some interesting conclusions concerning Job's suffering. Read Job 4:7-9; Job 8:11-13, and Job 11:13-20. Summarize here what Job's three friends concluded as to why he faced so many troubles. The main point of Job's friends concerning his suffering is that it must be God's punishment on him for sin. None of Job's friends offer true empathy or comfort to him in his time of need.

The advice Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar gave to Job was not only distressing, it is against the truth of Holy Scripture. How does the Bible rightly explain God's intentions for us in each of the references below?

Genesis 50:15-21: Joseph tells his brothers that while their actions intended to bring harm to him, God used Joseph's situation and suffering to save many lives.

Psalms 9:9-12: God is our stronghold and does not forsake those who pray to Him.

John 9:1-3: Concerning the disciples' question about the man born blind, Jesus emphasizes that the man's blindness is not due to a specific sin of the man or of his parents. Instead, Jesus said that through this man, God's works *might be displayed* (verse 3).

James 1:2-4, 12-18: God works good through our trials and suffering to test us and to strengthen our faith. God cannot be tempted by evil and He tempts no one. We are drawn into sin through our own sinful nature. God is only good.

Read Job 7. Which of Job's feelings described in this chapter are similar to ones you have felt when you've suffered? Job's feelings as he suffered included grief, pain, bitterness, hopelessness, terror, and exhaustion.

Job did not understand why God was allowing such suffering to befall him. Yet through it all, Job held on to one eternal truth. Read Job 19:25-27. What is that truth? Job knew that His Redeemer lives and that in his flesh, he would someday see God.

How can remembering the truth of Job 19:25-27 anchor us in our own times of suffering? Knowing that Jesus conquered sin, death, and Satan through His death and resurrection for us, we know that through faith in Him, we, too, have conquered these things. We know that our earthly suffering is only temporary and will end when we reach our true home in heaven.

Jesus, our true Friend and true Savior, fully understands our feelings when we suffer. Read Luke 22:39-40 and 22:63-65. What was the source of Jesus' suffering? The source of Jesus' suffering was the weight of our sins and the sins of the whole world in His body as well as the physical punishment He endured on His way to the cross and when He was crucified on it. As true Man, Jesus' suffering had already begun in the Garden of Gethsemane as He dreaded what He knew was to come.

Despite His dread, what does Jesus pray to His heavenly Father (Luke 22:42)? Jesus asked God to take the suffering away from Him. But despite this request, Jesus surrendered His will to His Father's. Jesus knew the only way that we could be saved from our sins was through His death.

How does God respond to Jesus' suffering (verse 43)? God sent an angel to strengthen His Son.

What does Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane show you about what our response can be in times of suffering? Because of Jesus, we can bring our wants and desires and our suffering to God in prayer. Our Lord Jesus surrendered His will to God. By the power of the Holy Spirit, we are able to do likewise.

As He suffered, Job bombarded God with questions. Then God came to Job and asked him questions that Job could not answer.

Read Job 38-41. What do God's questions to Job reveal about God and why we can trust Him to help us in any time of need? God is almighty. He made all things and continues to care for all things. God knows all things and controls all things. We can trust in God because His love and forgiveness of us overcomes any evil, suffering, or trouble that we may endure.

Read Job 42:1-9. Job confessed his lack of understanding of God's might and mercy. God led Job to recognize that he was but a man and that God alone is all-knowing and all-powerful. The Holy Spirit worked in Job's heart and led him to repent. Why is repentance such an important element in Job's surrender to God as well as in our own surrender to Him? Repentance is a turning away from sin and evil and our sinful desires. It is a turning to God and to His good and perfect will. It is recognizing that God knows best and is best. Daily, the Holy Spirit works through God's Word to show us our sin, to help us to turn away

from our sinful thoughts and actions, and to remind us that we are forgiven of our sins through faith in Christ Jesus.

John writes in 1 John 1:9: *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Cleansed and forgiven by God, what was Job now freed to do? Job was freed to forgive his friends for their harmful and false accusations toward him.

What joy or peace do we miss when we stubbornly hold onto our will instead of surrendering to God that His Kingdom may come among us? When we stubbornly hold on to our will, we hurt ourselves further by trying to do things our own way. We miss opportunities to come to know God better and better through His righteous actions that benefit us. We miss opportunities to show and share His love and forgiveness with others.

Read James 4:7-10. What does God promise us when we surrender ourselves to Him? For Jesus' sake, we receive God's forgiveness; a new, eternal life; and a home in heaven with Him someday.

God did not leave Job destitute. Read Job 42:10-17. How did God bless Job in his later years? God blessed the later days of Job more than his beginning (verse 12). God gave Job livestock, seven sons, and three daughters (verse 13), and gave Job a long life in which he saw four generations of his family (verse 16).

Read Revelation 21:3-4. What does God promise all believers no matter what suffering we might experience during our life here on earth? When we reach our heavenly home, we will be with God and He will dwell with us. He will wipe away every tear from [our] eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, or crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away (verse 4).

A final thought: Aletha Voges, the author of this study, walked with her husband Pastor Ethan Voges through his 15-month battle with pancreatic cancer. After much suffering, God took Pastor Voges to his eternal home in heaven. Aletha concludes, "Had I not, through the power of the Holy Spirit, surrendered my will to be used as God saw fit, the outcome of my husband Ethan's 15-month battle with pancreatic cancer would not have changed, but I would have missed seeing the power of God working in our lives. I would not be living with the peace I now have. I look back and remember how it felt like I was living in two different worlds. The one included the day-to-day struggles of Ethan's illness. The other, a view of God working in our lives and in the lives of others touched by our experiences. One day while reading Daniel 2:22, I found these words, ... *he [God] reveals deep and hidden things.* As I read and pondered His Word, God helped me see His hidden messages through the struggles we faced. God has given me the privilege to share with others the insights He has given me. God did not answer my prayers as I wanted. He had a better plan. I now live in forgiveness by the power of the Holy Spirit helping me as I struggle to continue living in surrender to Christ."

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