

SURRENDER — PART 2

Bible Study • Leader Guide

[Please provide a Bible and a copy of this study for all participants.]

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 lives 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.

Opening 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 will 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?

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 wellbeing? 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 5:3–4 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* (verse 39).

God allowed Satan to inflict pain on Job's body but told Satan that he must spare Job's life.

According to Job 2:9, 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?

He did not sin against God.

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

Job continues to trust in God even though he knows his suffering ultimately comes from God. His response to his wife shows his strong faith, but he does indeed agonize with not knowing why he suffers.

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, 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. They can also spur us to prayer and reading our Bible and through that grow closer to our Lord.

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 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 offers 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 by their actions they 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 have 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 22:39–42 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. However, 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 that 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 overcome 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 latter 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, nor 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.”

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?

[Encourage willing participants to share their insights.]

Closing Prayer: Lord God, You know the difficulties each of us is facing today. Many times, we try to solve the problems on our own 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.

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