

# **SURRENDER**

GROUP LEADER'S GUIDE

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This guide is to be used in conjunction with *Surrender: Secure God's Best for Your Life* by Wayne Schmidt (Indianapolis: Wesleyan Publishing House, 2017).

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## ABOUT THIS STUDY

It takes a bit of courage to pick up a book titled *Surrender*. For many people—perhaps including you or some in your group—this topic triggers a strong negative response. The very idea of surrender seems distasteful, the loss of our cherished independence.

Through this challenging study, you'll learn to see surrender in a different way. When you respond with faith to those moments when Jesus beckons you to follow him in deeper surrender, you will be transformed into his likeness. When you resist God's call to surrender, you will remain as you are. Join Jesus in saying, "Not my will but yours be done," and you will experience transformation. Surrender is the gateway to the life you have longed for.

## LEADING YOUR GROUP

Over the next eight weeks you'll lead your group in understanding and experiencing surrender. Each group session examines a key idea concerning surrender and leads you to:

*Discover*—Identifying key concepts communicated through the book *Surrender*.

*Explore*—Processing that learning and how it applies to your life.

*Experience*—Deepening your relationship with God by surrendering more fully to him.

As you lead your group, keep these things in mind.

- *Be patient.* Surrender is a challenging concept for many people. Allow time for group members to wrestle with these ideas.
- *Be positive.* Though this subject may cause some anxiety and fear of loss, it is an overwhelmingly positive message and experience. Always point to the benefit of surrender: a deeper, more joyful life in relationship with God.
- *Be inviting.* Group members will be more willing to surrender themselves to God as you present an invitation and opportunity to do so.
- *Be available.* Contact your group members between sessions to encourage their spiritual exploration and keep them focused on the goal of full surrender.

The book *Surrender* includes two types of chapters: experience and reflection. Each week, you'll read one experiential surrender by the author and his reflections on that experience. Encourage your group members to read both chapters each week and to apply the learning to their lives. Remember to allow time for sharing each week, so members can report their growth, progress, or questions.

This study offers both the inspiration and the understanding that will enable you to respond to God's call to surrender in your life with a resounding "Yes!"



## **A NEW DEFINITION OF SURRENDER**

Chapters 1 and 2

### **TO THE FACILITATOR**

The goal of this session is to redefine surrender from a negative experience to a positive one. You will help your group discover that surrendering to God always produces the best result in your life.

### **DIVE IN**

*Ask*, “What do you think of when you hear the word *surrender*?”

*Say*, “Today we’ll discover that surrendering to God is the most positive thing you can do in life.”

### **DISCOVER**

Lead your group in identifying the key concepts introduced in *Surrender*, using these questions.

1. What was the author’s experience in Chapter 1? What was his basic dilemma?
2. Wayne states, “Spiritual conflict occurs at any point when our faith and feelings collide” (p. 19). What do you think he means by that? What are the common fears in surrender?
3. What is the “cycle of listening and reflecting” (p. 21), and what does that have to do with surrender?
4. What is the “critical question” with surrender that Wayne identified in these chapters (see pp. 23–24)?
5. How would you define surrender as a spiritual experience?

## EXPLORE

Help your group apply these concepts to their own lives using these questions.

1. When it comes to surrendering to God, what are you most afraid of? Why?
2. Look at the chart of Offering Plate Moments on page 21. If you made a chart for your life, what would be some of the significant moments of surrender?
3. In what ways have you gained (or lost) by surrendering to God? In what ways have you gained (or lost) by keeping control of your own life?
4. What voices (God's, your own, others) influence your ideas about surrender?

## EXPERIENCE

Help your group take action on what they have discovered.

1. What is God calling you to surrender right now?
2. What would it take for you to overcome your fear and trust God on that issue?
3. Will you make that surrender to God today?
4. Pray with your group, asking the Holy Spirit to lead them into deeper surrender.

## SEND OFF

*Say:* “For the next time, read Chapters 3 and 4 of *Surrender*. When we come back, I’ll give you a chance to share how it’s going in your decision to surrender to God at a deeper level.”



## **WHEN SURRENDER HAPPENS**

Chapters 3 and 4

### **TO THE FACILITATOR**

The goal of this session is to understand that surrender brings power. You will help your group expect good things from God and consecrate themselves to him, resulting in spiritual transformation.

### **CHECK IN**

*Ask*, “How is it going since our last session? What have you been learning about surrender?”  
Allow members time to share their experience.

### **DIVE IN**

*Ask*, “When do you feel the most energetic or empowered? In the early morning, late at night, or some other time?”

*Say*, “Today we’ll discover that real power comes from consecrating our lives to God.”

### **DISCOVER**

Lead your group in identifying the key concepts introduced in *Surrender*, using these questions.

1. What was the author’s experience in Chapter 3? What was his basic conflict?
2. What is the impact of ego or pride on our ability to surrender? Why is that?
3. Look at the Grace Grid (p. 37). Can you explain what this chart means?



4. Wayne Schmidt states, “Surrender occurs when our level of urgency is combined with understanding and results in sacrifice” (p. 36). Where do you see these concepts highlighted in Romans 12:1?

5. What is consecration? How would you define it?

### **EXPLORE**

Help your group apply these concepts to their own lives using these questions.

1. How high is your level of expectation from God? What factors account for your level of expectation?

2. Read Ephesians 3:16–21. How closely does Paul’s prayer match your experience? Again, what factors might account for this?

3. Review the steps of grace on page 43. Which step would you say you’re on? Where would you like to be?

4. Review the Growth Cycle on page 47. Why do you think so many people can live in denial about their spiritual need?

### **EXPERIENCE**

Help your group take action on what they have discovered.

1. Based on the Growth Cycle on page 47, which stage are you in right now?

2. What would it take for you to move to the next quadrant on that cycle?

3. Will you make that move today?

Pray with your group, asking the Holy Spirit to lead them consecrating their lives to God.

### **SEND OFF**

Say: “For next time, read Chapters 5 and 6 of *Surrender*. Get in touch with someone from the group this week and ask them how their surrender journey is going. I’ll give you time to share next time.”



## **THE PATHWAY OF SURRENDER**

Chapters 5 and 6

### **TO THE FACILITATOR**

The goal of this session is to see that surrender begins in the heart and works its way into all of life. You will help your group see that behavior modification is not surrender, but surrender produces changed behavior.

### **CHECK IN**

Say, “Sometimes our spiritual decisions are tested right away. What’s it been like for you since last time? Has your consecration to God been tested?” Allow members time to share their experience.

### **DIVE IN**

Ask, “How good are you at making and keeping resolutions?”

Say, “Today we’ll discover that willpower alone will never change your life, but real surrender will.”

### **DISCOVER**

Lead your group in identifying the key concepts introduced in *Surrender*, using these questions.

1. What did the author experience in Chapter 5? What was he going through?
2. Wayne Schmidt states, “Surrender must progress outward to encompass the mind and body. Entire sanctification is holiness in spirit, soul, and body” (p. 64). Where do you see support for this concept in Romans 12:1?

3. Look at the well diagram on page 67. Explain what the author calls the “pathway of surrender” based on this chart.

4. Look at the bull’s-eye diagram on page 67. Explain what the author means when he says, “Only when we surrender there [the core of our being] will our love for him radiate outward to encompass intellect, emotions, senses, and actions”?

### **EXPLORE**

Help your group apply these concepts to their own lives using these questions.

1. How effective has willpower been, in your experience, in producing lasting change?
2. Can you relate a time when inner surrender led to an outer life change—that is, to a change in behavior?
3. Why is it so tempting to try to “power through” and make changes on our own, without God’s help?
4. The author says that surrender is a matter of life and death (see pp. 68–69). Do you agree? What’s at stake in your life in terms of surrender to God?

### **EXPERIENCE**

Help your group take action on what they have discovered.

1. Wayne Schmidt states that obedience brings freedom (p. 74). In what area of your life do you long for freedom?
  2. What would it take for you to surrender your will (and willpower) to God?
  3. Will you make that surrender today?
- Pray with your group, asking the Holy Spirit to lead them in an act of surrender.

### **SEND OFF**

Say: “For next time, read Chapters 7 and 8 of *Surrender*. Pray for one another during the week ahead. We’re making serious spiritual resolves, and we need support in doing this.”



## **WHERE SURRENDER STALLS**

Chapters 7 and 8

### **TO THE FACILITATOR**

The goal of this session is to identify double-mindedness or un-surrendered areas in the heart. You will help others see that maintaining control in any area of life will cause surrender to stall.

### **CHECK IN**

Say, “We talked last time about surrender bringing life changes. Can you share a life change you’re making based on your surrender to God?” Allow members time to share their experience. If members are reluctant to share, that’s okay. It takes time to build intimacy within a group.

### **DIVE IN**

Ask, “What’s your style for making decisions? Do you make quick decisions and stick to them? Take a long time to ponder? Or make loose plans and change as you go along?”

Say, “Today we’ll discover that any area of indecision in your life will cause surrender to stall. Your consecration to God must be complete.”

### **DISCOVER**

Lead your group in identifying the key concepts introduced in *Surrender*, using these questions.

1. What was the author’s experience in Chapter 7? What inner conflict was he facing?

2. Read Romans 12:1–2. Describe the various aspects of the self you see there. How does each one play into surrender?

3. Look at the chart “Where You Get Stuck” on page 88. Describe the meaning behind this?

4. What are some ways that our minds can be renewed (see pp. 88–89)?

5. What are some ways our emotions can be renewed (see pp. 90–91)?

6. What are some ways our will can be renewed (see pp. 92–93)?

### **EXPLORE**

Help your group apply these concepts to their own lives using these questions.

1. What’s your soul strength (see pp. 93–96)?

2. In what ways have you seen (or experienced) that a soul strength can hinder surrender?

3. Do you think most people are aware of the ways in which they are double-souled (or double-minded)? Why or why not?

4. What is at stake when we hold out an area of our heart from God? What are the risks?

### **EXPERIENCE**

Help your group take action on what they have discovered.

1. Is there an area of your heart that is not fully surrendered to God?

2. What would it take for you to surrender fully?

3. Will you make that surrender today?

Pray with your group, asking the Holy Spirit to lead them in an act of surrender.

### **SEND OFF**

Say: “For next time, read Chapters 9 and 10 of *Surrender*. I’ll check in with you this week to see how it’s going. I’ll be praying for you on your journey to full surrender.”



## **SURRENDER REQUIRES SELF-AWARENESS**

Chapters 9 and 10

### **TO THE FACILITATOR**

The goal of this session is to become aware of your need for greater self-knowledge in order to be more fully surrendered to God. You will help others see the areas of their lives that may be hidden even from themselves.

### **CHECK IN**

Say, “Who can relate something about their journey to surrender since our last meeting?”  
Allow members time to share their experience.

### **DIVE IN**

Ask, “In your home or workplace, are you the most talented, least talented, or somewhere in between?”

Say, “Today we’ll learn that we don’t always see ourselves accurately. However, knowing exactly who you are is critical for surrendering yourself fully to God.”

### **DISCOVER**

Lead your group in identifying the key concepts introduced in *Surrender*, using these questions.

1. What was the author’s experience in Chapter 9? What relational conflict did he face? How was it resolved?

2. Read Romans 12:3. How does this verse relate to the preceding two verses about surrender?

3. The author states, “Other interaction with those around us will be both an element of and a proof of our complete surrender to God” (p. 109). Explain what he means. Do you agree or disagree? Why?

4. See the diagram on page 112. What does it mean that “love is moderated by self-knowledge”?

### **EXPLORE**

Help your group apply these concepts to their own lives using these questions.

1. When you assess yourself, do you tend to err by thinking too well of yourself or too little? Why do you think that is?

2. What aids to self-assessment are mentioned in the chapter? What aids to self-assessment have you tried? What have you learned from them?

3. The author says that a “well-differentiated person” has the ability to be objective about him- or herself (see pp. 117–119). Do you think you have objectivity about yourself? What could help you be more objective?

4. The ABCs of surrender are *awareness*, *becoming*, and *connecting* (see pp. 119–122). Which stage are you currently in?

### **EXPERIENCE**

Help your group take action on what they have discovered.

1. In what area do you need greater self-knowledge in order to more fully surrender to God?

2. What would it take for you to gain that self-knowledge?

3. When will you do that?

Pray with your group, asking the Holy Spirit to open your eyes to see yourselves clearly.

### **SEND OFF**

Say: “For next time, read Chapters 11 and 12 of *Surrender*. Let’s try one exercise in developing self-awareness this week and talk about it next time.”



## **SURRENDER DEEPENS RELATIONSHIPS**

Chapters 11 and 12

### **TO THE FACILITATOR**

The goal of this session is to allow surrender to God to impact relationships. You will help others identify the relationships in their lives that will be deepened by their surrender to God.

### **CHECK IN**

Say, “Were you able to try an exercise in self-awareness this week? How did it go?” Allow members time to share their experience.

### **DIVE IN**

Ask, “Are you an introvert or an extrovert?”

Say, “Today we’ll see that there is no holiness but social holiness, which is another way of saying that when you go deep with God, it will deepen your relationships with others?”

### **DISCOVER**

Lead your group in identifying the key concepts introduced in *Surrender*, using these questions.

1. What was the conflict the author experienced in Chapter 11? How did he resolve the conflict? What part did surrender play?
2. Read Romans 12:9–10. How do you see surrender’s impact on relationships in these verses?
3. What are the hallmarks of relational depth (see p. 135)? Explain what each one means.



4. The author states, “As we are changed through our surrender to God, that surrender changes the way we relate to others” (p. 133). Describe what those changes might look like.

### **EXPLORE**

Help your group apply these concepts to their own lives using these questions.

1. Do you ever resist being sincere, open, and honest in relationships? When or why?
2. Of the hallmarks of relational depth—integrity, sincerity, honesty, priority—which comes most naturally to you? Which do you tend to resist? Why?
3. Describe a relationship in which you experienced relational depth. What was its impact on you spiritually and emotionally?
4. Describe a relationship in which you avoided relational depth. What was its impact on you spiritually and emotionally?

### **EXPERIENCE**

Help your group take action on what they have discovered.

1. Name a relationship in which you feel the need to develop greater depth.
2. What would it take for you to pursue that level of depth?
3. Are you willing to commit to that today?

Pray with your group, asking the Holy Spirit to bring greater openness to one another.

### **SEND OFF**

Say: “For next time, read Chapters 13 and 14 of *Surrender*. Send me a text or email this week and let me know how your journey to surrender is going.”



## **SURRENDER WIDENS RELATIONSHIPS**

Chapters 13 and 14

### **TO THE FACILITATOR**

The goal of this session is to allow surrender to God to bring us into new relationships. You will help others identify relationships they can establish based on their surrender to God.

### **CHECK IN**

Say, “We talked a lot about relational depth last time. How have you seen God working in your relationships lately? How did it go?” Allow members time to share their experience.

### **DIVE IN**

Ask, “On a scale of 1 to 10, how comfortable are you trying new things?”

Say, “Today we’ll see that surrender to God inevitably brings us into new relationships with others.”

### **DISCOVER**

Lead your group in identifying the key concepts introduced in *Surrender*, using these questions.

1. What was the conflict the author experienced in Chapter 13? What part did surrender play in this experience?

2. Read Romans 12:13–16. Describe the connection between relationships and surrender in these verses?

3. The author believes both unity and diversity are important in the church. What Scriptures does he base this on (see pp. 158–160)? Why does he believe this to be true?

4. The author states that our surrender will drive us beyond familiarity and similarity in relationships. What does he mean by that (see pp. 160–165)?

5. Read Romans 12:17–19. Discuss the impact of surrender on relationships that have been strained or broken.

### **EXPLORE**

Help your group apply these concepts to their own lives using these questions.

1. How comfortable are you forming relationships with people who are different from you? Why do you think that is?

2. Think of a relationship that has been strained or broken. Do you see any possibility of mending that relationship based on your full surrender to God?

3. With what group or groups in the church do you feel the most at home? With whom do you feel the least at ease? What are your thoughts about that based on this chapter?

4. If you were to surrender fully to God, what impact would that have on your relationships with others?

### **EXPERIENCE**

Help your group take action on what they have discovered.

1. Think of a person or group that you have been avoiding for some reason.

2. What would it take for you to relate to them—or to be reconciled to them?

3. Are you willing to pursue that relationship?

Pray with your group, asking the Holy Spirit to overcome our fear of others.

### **SEND OFF**

Say: “For next time, read Chapters 15, 16, and 17 of *Surrender*. Let’s come to our last session ready to share how we’ve been changed by this study.”



## **SURRENDER BRINGS THE FULLNESS OF THE SPIRIT**

Chapters 15–17

### **TO THE FACILITATOR**

The goal of this session is to establish a Spirit-led life. You will help others realize that they are loved by God and have a deep connection with him.

### **CHECK IN**

Say, “This will be our last session on *Surrender*. What has God been doing in your life through this study?” Allow members time to share their experience.

### **DIVE IN**

Ask, “Are you a person who likes to make definite plans and stick to them, or do you fly by the seat of the pants?”

Say, “Today we’ll see that surrender to God establishes a deep connection to him through which we are able to walk in step with the Spirit.”

### **DISCOVER**

Lead your group in identifying the key concepts introduced in *Surrender*, using these questions.

1. What was the conflict the author experienced in Chapter 15? What part did personal identity play in this conflict? What part did surrender play?

2. Read Romans 12:1–2. What is the relationship between surrender and decision making? How have you seen this play out in your life or in the church?

3. What are some key evidences that a person had a deep connection with the Spirit (see pp. 183–185)?

4. How can people more deeply experience the love of God (see pp. 192–196)?

### **EXPLORE**

Help your group apply these concepts to their own lives using these questions.

1. What is your level of openness to the Spirit's leading in your life? Is that growing, declining, or staying the same?

2. At what moments do you most keenly feel the love of God? At what moments do you have difficulty feeling God's love?

3. What might you do to increase your capacity to feel the love of God?

4. Would you say that you "live by the Spirit"? Why or why not?

### **EXPERIENCE**

Help your group take action on what they have discovered.

1. What might be possible in your life if you were fully connected to the Spirit?

2. What would it take for you to fully surrender to God?

3. Are you willing to make that surrender today?

Pray with your group, asking the Holy Spirit to establish a deep connection with their hearts.

### **SEND OFF**

Say: "This has been a great time of growing deeper together. I'll be praying for you to face each 'offering plate moment' in your life with an act of surrender!"