



JOURNEY GROUPS

APR 12 LEADER GUIDE

LEADERS NOTES

A few notes for you as a leader as you meet again this week:

- This week, we enter a series on “Discipleship,” which is the core of our mission at Journey Church. Be thinking about what part you play as a JG leader in that Great Commission to make disciples like Jesus. How does your leadership add to the cause, and how are you being discipled to make more disciples?
- **SAVE THE DATE!!!!** On Monday, May 11th, we are having our end-of-year celebration for all Journey Groups! This is not just leaders, it's everyone! It will be a night to celebrate, have fun, and reflect! This will take place at 6:30 pm, and childcare will be provided. Let your groups know about it this week, please, and plan to come together!
- I want to encourage you today that God is at work in ways that you do not always see, and He is at work in and through you. Paul writes in 1 Cor 3:6–7 that he planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. You don't provide the results, but He adds grace to your faithfulness.

SHARE - ICE BREAKERS

- 1. Would You Rather: Always be the driver or always be the passenger? Plan every detail or go on a surprise trip? Know the full plan or trust someone else completely?
- 2. Follow-up to the previous question: “Which one was hardest to give up control in—and why?”
- 3. What was the great adventure of your childhood? (For Pastor Matt, it was exploring the woods behind his house?)

STUDY

Digging Deeper into "Discipleship: Surrender - Week 1"

1. What does the word surrender mean? (Functionally, "surrender" with choosing to see who is really in charge—**James 4:7**—and biblically, it continues with trust in Someone we see as trustworthy – **Proverbs 3:5–6**)
2. Why do Americans sometimes struggle with the words "surrender" and "submit"? (We struggle because we are taught from an early age that we are independent, free, and have the ability to choose our destiny for ourselves)
3. Matt gave 4 tests on Sunday to see if we are truly surrendered. The first test is to answer the question: Are you born again? What does it mean to be a born-again Christian? (It means that we trust in the amazing love of God for our eternal salvation, which was displayed most perfectly on the cross through Jesus Christ.)
4. To be born again requires us to have the cross in view, to trust in the work of God in Jesus for our salvation, and to be born again through the Spirit of God. If this is true, then what is the initial surrender? If God did all the work, then why do I need to surrender? (The cross requires an initial surrender of belief—**John 3:16**).
5. How does the symbolism of our baptism illustrate the idea of being born again? If you want a quick verse to add to your study, have someone read **2 Corinthians 5:17** (It pictures a new creation, a new life, a new potential, and a new family of God).
6. Christian pastor and theologian, John Stott, once wrote: "Every time we look at the cross Christ seems to say to us, 'I am here because of you; it is your sin I am bearing.'" How does this quote relate to surrender? If you think about this relationally, what does this add to our idea of surrender? (Surrender is always a response to the cross, because it was God's loving response to us.)
7. The second characteristic of surrender is obedience. Why is obedience proof of surrender? (Surrender of the heart will mean that our lives, habits, and choices will assume a posture of surrender that takes steps of obedience to God.)

8. Have someone **read Philippians 2:5-8**. What does it mean that Christ became obedient to death - even death on a cross? (Jesus' obedience included all of Himself. There was no part of His life that He did not surrender to full obedience.)
9. Christian theologian and pastor, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, wrote, "When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die." How does Bonhoeffer seem to define surrender? Do you agree or disagree? (Bonhoeffer seems to define surrender as a death to self; it isn't a partial adjustment to our lives, but a total relinquishment of our whole selves.)
10. **Read John 12:23-29**. This great scripture is full of key insights about discipleship and surrender. What are some key points that Jesus made in this passage? (Here are three key points: 1) Faithfulness requires a kind of death – **vs. 24**—but that death leads to life, which means that you don't ultimately lose your life by surrendering—you multiply its impact. 2) Clinging to self leads to loss – **vs. 25**—If your goal is to protect your comfort, control, or identity, you will actually lose what you're trying to keep. 3) Surrender leads to intimacy and honor – **vs. 26**—Surrender is not just loss; it is relational gain.)
11. The third characteristic of surrender is knowing that everything belongs to the Lord. What is the difference between a steward and an owner? (An owner has the full authority to decide concerning something. The owner has possession and can also decide the purpose of something. The owner also takes full responsibility. But the steward can find security and confidence in the owner's responsibility. The steward gives an account to the owner, seeks the owner's purposes, and recognizes that what they have been entrusted with is not theirs. The steward has delegated authority, but sees their life as God's to direct and manage.)

12. Our Heavenly Father takes great joy in blessing us. He gives us many great gifts not so we can hoard them, but so that we can have the same joy He has all the time. Why is it better to give than to receive? (Giving ourselves to God reflects the heart of God –**Acts 20:35; John 3:16**—as God gave His Son for us and to us. Giving also releases us from the tyranny of self-focus—**Luke 12:15**—where we can live for others as God does. This is why God loves a cheerful giver—**2 Corinthians 9:7**—because God is a cheerful Giver!)
13. The fourth characteristic of surrender from Sunday was called 'life-lean.' This phrase simply asks the question: "Where do you put your trust for everything in your life? Do you 'trust in the Lord with all your heart' or do you lean on other people or things?"
14. What are the things you are most tempted, right now, to trust in or lean on more than God? (One of the great temptations comes through suffering, where we want to take back control because of pain.)
15. Christian pastor Charles Spurgeon once said, "I have learned to kiss the wave that throws me against the Rock of Ages." What kind of trust does this statement depict? (Surrender includes embracing God's providential control—even suffering becomes a means of deeper dependence.)
16. Matt closed on Sunday with an encouragement to all who find themselves in a season of waiting. When the stakes are huge, waiting for an answer, an outcome, or a diagnosis can feel like torture. Why is surrender the only way to peace in these critical, scary, and frustrating seasons? (In relationship with God, surrender becomes a path to strength--see **Isaiah 40:31**--because we don't go through it alone!)
17. The big question on Sunday was: Are you a fully surrendered Christian? What is something God might be asking you to lay at His feet as a beautiful act of surrender?

PRAYER

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