

Thriving through Surrender

Lesson 03 of the series, "Thrive"

I. Jesus wants us to thrive.

"I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." John 10:10 (NKJV)

"I came so they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of."

John 10:10 (MSG)

Note: Jesus doesn't define "thriving" the same way our culture does.

Then he said to the crowd, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross daily, and follow me. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it." Luke 9:23-24 (NLT)

II. We thrive when we surrender.

a. We thrive when we surrender control.

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil. This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones."

Proverbs 3:5-8 (NIV)

"Oh, the joys of those who... delight in the law of the LORD, meditating on it day and night. They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season. Their leaves never wither, and they prosper in all they do." Psalm 1:1-3 (NLT)

Note: "There is a path before each person that seems right, but it ends in death." Proverbs 14:12 (NLT)

b. We thrive when we surrender our rights.

"God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs. God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven... If a soldier demands that you carry his gear for a mile, carry it two miles. Give to those who ask, and don't turn away from those who want to borrow... love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven."

Matthew 5:10-12,41-45 (NLT)

c. We thrive when we surrender our money / possessions.

Once a religious leader asked Jesus this question: "Good Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?" "Why do you call me good?" Jesus asked him. "Only God is truly good. But to answer your question, you know the commandments: 'You must not commit adultery. You must not murder. You must not steal. You must not testify falsely. Honor your father and mother.'" The man replied, "I've carefully obeyed all these commandments since I was young." When Jesus heard his answer, he said, "There is still one thing you haven't done. Sell all your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." But when the man heard this he became sad, for he was very rich. When Jesus saw this, he said, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the Kingdom of God! In fact, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of God!" Those who heard this said, "Then who in the world can be saved?" He replied, "What is impossible for people is possible with God." Peter said, "We've left our homes to follow you." "Yes," Jesus replied, "and I assure you that everyone who has given up house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the Kingdom of God, will be repaid many times over in this life, and will have eternal life in the world to come." Luke 18:18-30 (NLT)

d. We thrive when we surrender our relationships.

"A large crowd was following Jesus. He turned around and said to them, 'If you want to be my disciple, you must hate everyone else by comparison—your father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even your own life. Otherwise, you cannot be my disciple. And if you do not carry your own cross and follow me, you cannot be my disciple.'" Luke 14:26-27 (NLT)

e. We thrive when we surrender our time.

“Trust in the LORD and do good. Then you will live safely in the land and prosper. Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you your heart’s desires. Commit everything you do to the LORD. Trust him, and he will help you... Be still in the presence of the LORD, and wait patiently for him to act... Put your hope in the LORD. Travel steadily along his path.” Psalm 37:3-7, 34 (NLT)

III. Three important notes on surrendering.

- a. We must count the cost.

“But don’t begin until you count the cost. For who would begin construction of a building without first calculating the cost to see if there is enough money to finish it? Otherwise, you might complete only the foundation before running out of money, and then everyone would laugh at you. They would say, ‘There’s the person who started that building and couldn’t afford to finish it!’ Or what king would go to war against another king without first sitting down with his counselors to discuss whether his army of 10,000 could defeat the 20,000 soldiers marching against him? And if he can’t, he will send a delegation to discuss terms of peace while the enemy is still far away. So you cannot become my disciple without giving up everything you own.” Luke 14:28-33 (NLT)

- b. Surrendering all is a lifelong process.

“I don’t mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection. But I press on to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me. No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.” Philippians 3:12-14 (NLT)

- c. God will help us.

“God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.”

Philippians 2:13 (NLT)

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Connect Group Questions.

1. Read Luke 18:18-30. If you could have pulled the rich young ruler aside after his conversation with Jesus, what would you have said to help him?
2. What does our society think of the term ‘surrender’? Does it have a positive or negative connotation?
3. In your opinion, when it comes to this idea of surrender, are most believers more focused on what they are giving up or to whom they are surrendering?
4. What does it look like to put Proverbs 3:5-6 into practice? Why can God be trusted with the direction of your life?
5. What are some of the emotions/feelings that you have experienced when you surrendered control of your life to God? (i.e. uncertainty, fear, peace, contentment, etc.)
6. “Fear stifles our thinking and actions”, Charles Stanley. How can we overcome the fear of giving away control of our life to God?
7. What are some ways a believer “Thrives” (*living a John 10:10 life*) by surrendering their life to God?
8. Share an area of your life that you are struggling to surrender to God. (i.e.: career, time, children, hobby, relationships, calendar, etc.)

Quotations to consider:

“All to Jesus I surrender, all to Him I freely give; I will ever love and trust Him, in His presence daily live. I surrender all, I surrender all; all to Thee, my blessed Savior, I surrender all. All to Jesus I surrender, humbly at His feet I bow; worldly pleasures all forsaken, take me, Jesus, take me now.” Judson W. Van DeVenter

“TGIF, Today God Is First.” Os Hillman, www.marketplaceleaders.org

“You cannot out-give God. I challenge you to try it and see.” Billy Graham

“Who do we believe in more? Ourselves or God? Our actions and decisions will reflect that.” Craig Groeschel