



QUIET TIME BIBLE STUDY

STRONGHOLDS OF UNSURRENDER

God's Searchlight - Our Willingness to Hear

1. We will begin this quiet time pondering our walk with the Lord. This is a scriptural activity. What do the following verses teach us to do?

a) Psalm 26:2

b) Psalm 139:23-24

Ask God to guide your thoughts as you prepare for His searchlight in your life.

2. Hebrews 4:12 says that His Word is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. What do the following verses tell us about God's knowledge of us?

a) I Corinthians 4:5

b) Psalm 139:1-6

c) Jeremiah 17:9-10

3. Read Hebrews 4:13. Is there anything that we can hide from the Lord?

Often, when we come to the Lord, we believe that we are surrendering all to Him. But all of us have areas of our life that are not surrendered to the Lord. As we grow in our relationship with the Lord and honestly seek Him, He lovingly points these areas out to us. God always asks that we lay whatever competes with Him for our hearts on the altar. When we are aware of an area of our life that we have not surrendered to Him but don't allow God to deal with it, this area can become a stronghold.

This may not be an easy or comfortable quiet time. Tearing down strongholds and surrendering to the Lord means that we are giving Him control, something our flesh does not want to do!

4. Write out a prayer here, based upon what you have read above. Ask God to put His searchlight on your life, so that you won't deceive yourself. Ask Him to reveal to you areas of your life that have remained unsurrendered to Him. Ask Him to help you respond correctly, by giving you the courage to surrender.

God's Searchlight - Our Willingness to See

5. Take a moment to consider everything that makes up your life. What roles do you fill in life? Put a check mark in the box by each role that describes you:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child of God | <input type="checkbox"/> Daughter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Granddaughter | <input type="checkbox"/> Sister |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aunt | <input type="checkbox"/> Niece |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wife | <input type="checkbox"/> Mother |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grandmother | <input type="checkbox"/> Employer/Employee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher (professional or at home) | <input type="checkbox"/> CoWorker to _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dating relationship with _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> CoWorker to _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Church leadership | <input type="checkbox"/> Friend to _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mentor to _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Friend to _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

6. With regard to the relationships that you marked above, consider the questions below:
- Does someone that you have a relationship to above require time that you are reluctant or too busy to give?
 - Is there a relationship that God wants surrendered to Him?

7. Take a moment to consider some areas of your life where you like to be in control. Which ones are issues you are dealing with at this time in your life?

- Our time
- Our money and material comforts
- Dating/Marriage/Sex
- TV/Movies/Books/Entertainment
- Areas of Self-Control: Habits/Addictions
- Physical bodies (exercise, health, pain)
- Emotions (anger, envy, bitterness, love)

8. With regard to the areas that you marked above, consider the questions below:

- Is God indicating a relationship or area of your life that may require a monetary sacrifice that you are reluctant to give?
- Is there an area of your life where God wants control?
- Is there an issue in one of these “control areas” that hinders or affects any or all of your relationship in some way?

9. We are going to take time to allow God to narrow down our focus to just one of these areas. Ask God which area He would like you to prayerfully consider during this quiet time. Go through the lists in questions #5 and #7 several times. What is that area that the Lord seems to be highlighting for you to focus on today?

10. The area God has highlighted may seem minor to you, or you may recognize it as being a huge issue in your life. Regardless of your assessment of the seriousness of the issue God has pointed out, II Corinthians 10:5 says that a stronghold in our life is an area in our life where we have refused to give God control. It is a wall that keeps us from knowing Him better. Right now you may be making arguments or excuses in your mind, as your flesh is unwilling to deal with this as a “stronghold” in your life. What are the arguments/excuses that come to your mind now or have been prevalent during your struggle?

10. Strongholds hinder us in our walk with the Lord. One definition of a stronghold is: “... a mind-set impregnated with hopelessness that causes us to accept as unchangeable, situations that we know are contrary to the will of God.” (Silvoso) You may consider this area impossible to change. You can’t move forward in this quiet time without acknowledging this as a stronghold in your life. Can you do that?
11. What truth do we know about God as we proceed in this study? See Luke 18:27. How does this encourage you as you continue?

God’s Searchlight - Our Willingness to Obey

12. What do we learn about the war and our God-given weapons in II Corinthians 10:3-6? What does II Corinthians 10:4 say that we will be specifically doing to these strongholds? Are you willing?

“Pulling down” means to demolish and destroy.

13. Below is a list of questions to consider as you pray about this area that the Lord has pointed out in your life. (Some may not apply to your particular issue.)
- Regarding this issue, from whom are you accepting advice?
 - Is this the first time you have faced this issue? If not, what is different from the last time you faced it?
 - Do you feel any hopelessness about this? (i.e. This person, these circumstances, will NEVER change...)
 - Has God given you any direction concerning this issue? Have you been obedient?
 - What is the world’s opinion about it? Have you searched out God’s opinion?
 - When you think about this issue, does your mind automatically come up with arguments or rationalizations?
 - Is forgiveness required?
 - Do you blame God in this issue?
 - Are you proud of your self-sufficiency in this issue?

- Are you in denial regarding the seriousness of this issue in your life?
- Is this an area where you are irritable, critical, touchy, prone to anger, jealous or self-centered?

14. These are important questions to ask. II Corinthians 10:5 says that we must cast down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against what we know to be true about God. How will God help us according to Philippians 2:13?

Unconditional Surrender

Surrender may require that you accept things as they are permanently. It may require that you give your hopes and dreams regarding this into God's care. Surrender always necessitates death to self and sin. That would be impossible without God's help and strength. Surrender--dying to our flesh--is painful, costly and difficult. No wonder our flesh resists it. The cross of Jesus Christ is the only motive that can compel us to die to self.

15. We see instances throughout scripture where God's men and women yielded to the Lord in unconditional surrender. It was never easy. Let's look at some of these examples:

- (a) Job wrestled with the difficult things that God had allowed in His life. Instead of turning away from God, he confronted God with his questions and doubts. What are his words of surrender in Job 42:1-6?
- (b) We see Jesus in agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, asking His Father if there could possibly a way other than the cross. What are His words of surrender in Mark 14:34-36?
- (c) Paul dealt with a thorn in his flesh that he begged God to relieve. God's response was "My grace is sufficient for you." What are Paul's words of surrender in II Corinthians 12:9b-10?

16. What do we know about God that makes surrender easier? Read Psalm 103:8-14
What does God's Word say about obedience in I Samuel 15:22?

When you are ready, write down your prayer of surrender on the paper provided. Then take this issue to the cross. As you do this, you are giving God control and expressing your desire for His will instead of your own.

18. Are there any further steps of obedience that you need to take?

Rejoicing in His Victory

19. The result of true surrender is broken and contrite heart. How does Psalms 51:16-17 express this truth?
20. Our only real choice is to recognize our inability to make eternal changes in ourselves and kneel brokenly in complete surrender to the love and mercy of God. Reread our theme verses in Romans 12:1-2. How will true and lasting transformation in this area of our lives take place?
21. God gives us a promise in Isaiah 57:15-19 when we choose to yield to the Lover of our souls. What does He promise?

Surrender is, in itself, a victory. As you wait for God to work, consider how the Word says that we are to live by faith and not by sight. How does that apply to what you have given to the Lord today?

By your act of surrender, the big battle may have been fought, and the stronghold torn down. But be aware that the enemy will continue his assault. Claim God's promise in Hebrews 4:16, and go boldly to His throne of grace to obtain mercy and find grace to help whenever you need it.