

## Leader Corner

Refocus Week 5

The Surrendered Life

Ephesians 2:1-10

We began this new year with a desire to “ReFocus” on the most important things in life: Who God is and who we are becoming as Jesus followers. Like a fresh coat of paint in your family room that brings new life and perspective, we are hoping for our entire church to refocus on what it looks like to collectively live out the transformative love and grace that we experience in Jesus and His gospel.

Be sure to leave ample time to go through the “with Practice” portion of this week’s study.

**Main Idea:** *We are called to live a surrendered life*

**Main Practice:** *Identifying “unsurrendered” areas in your life*

**Main Teaching:** *Ephesians 2:8-10*

## Refocus with Praise

Take some time to sing or listen to the song “How Deep the Father’s Love For Us / Deeper Still.” We sang this song on Sunday and it’s a reminder that God is for us and loves to intercede in our lives.

“Yet Not I But Through Christ In Me” and “Son of Suffering” are two other songs from Sunday that may be helpful for your group to spend time with.

After a time of praise, read the following passage aloud as a group:

*“Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied gifts.”*

*(1 Peter 4: 8-10)*

## with Prayer

Have someone in your group pray the following prayer of gathering:

*“Almighty God, grant that those who worship you this day may present their bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, and acceptable to you. By the power of your Holy Spirit make us strong to fulfill our ministry this day. In the name of Jesus, Amen.”*

*(Adapted from A Guide to Prayer—Upper Room Books)*

There is a great deception that lurks in the shadows of our every day lives. It's been around for millennia and subtly permeates our hearts when we lose focus on what truly matters. It festers when we rationalize our lifestyles and priorities with anything, or anyone being placed before Jesus in our lives. Theologian Foulkes describes this lurking deception as the greatest temptation for all of us, "so great is man's (and woman's) temptation in every age and race to deceive himself (herself) into thinking that his (her) life is good enough for God." But the truth is we are not and will never be.

That's what is so powerful and mind blowing about Jesus. This week's study rounds everything out for us. Because of God's greatness, grace, authority and loving kindness for His people, we can become something that we could never achieve on our own. Through Jesus, we can become who we are truly meant to be. If we surrender, concede the sinful deception that envelopes our every day lives, there is promise for us to be made new. This new identity brings the freedom and opportunity to spread this good news to anyone and everyone around us. Through the saving grace of Jesus, our surrendered lives are powerful gifts.

We see Jesus using his power and authority not to coerce or demand, but to create, redeem, serve, and restore. Jesus says we can do the same. In fact, he says we can do even greater things than he did through the help of the Holy Spirit. That is fascinating and begs the question, do we understand our surrendered lives as having this same calling?

1. Have someone read Ephesians 2:1-10.
  - a. How does this passage describe God's approach to us?
  - b. What do we learn about God and his character?
  - c. How have you seen redeeming grace permeate your life?
2. Read Ephesians 2:10 in the Amplified Version. This passage beautifully talks about the idea of becoming God's workmanship, and being created for good works.
  - a. What is something good and positive in your life in which you see "God's workmanship?"
  - b. What is something challenging or difficult in your life which you need or believe that "God's workmanship" can transform? (Think both internally and with various relationships)
3. Becoming God's workmanship assumes a surrendered life. Paul reminds us that Jesus, himself gave us this example. Read Philippians 2:5-8.
  - a. What is the mindset of a surrendered life?
  - b. What are the behaviors of a surrendered life?
  - c. What is the goal of a surrendered life?

1. First break into smaller groups of 2 or 3.
  - a. What areas in your life need to be surrendered or re-surrendered?
  - b. How can you specifically love one another well in this coming week?
2. Next, spend time praying over one another.
3. At the end of your group gathering, stand together in a circle facing one another. If you feel comfortable, we encourage you to hold hands. Ask someone to pray the following prayer: *"May the Lord make you strong to do the work of ministry. Amen."*
4. Finally, have everyone face outward, while still holding hands. Have another group member pray the same prayer: *"May the Lord make you strong to do the work of ministry today, and everyday this week. Amen."*

## For Further Focus

1 Peter 2:9-12 talks about the surrendered life of a Jesus follower.

- What are we called to proclaim to others?
- How are we called to live in light of God's grace?
- What needs to change in your every day life to reflect this grace toward others?

1 Peter 4:7-11 continues describing the surrendered life of a Jesus follower.

- Who is included in the "one another" language in this passage? Is there anyone that you should not extend God's grace toward (definitely a leading question)?
- How does Peter describe the surrendered life? How can you live these things out today or this week?