

5-Day Bible Reading Plan and Devotional Guide: Open Hands, Open Life

Day 1: Surrender Is Not Defeat

Reading: Proverbs 3:5-6

Devotional: There is a profound difference between giving up and giving over. Giving up says, "I quit." Giving over says, "God, I trust you more than I trust myself." Proverbs 3:5-6 calls believers to trust God completely, not partially, and to resist leaning on their own limited understanding. This is the foundation of biblical surrender. The path forward does not require you to have everything figured out. It requires you to trust the One who does. Today, identify one area of your life where your understanding has been louder than your trust in God. Consciously choose faith over familiarity.

Day 2: Even Jesus Wrestled

Reading: Luke 22:41-42

Devotional: In the garden, Jesus did not pretend. He acknowledged the weight of what was before Him, asking the Father to remove the cup if possible. Yet He did not stop there. He moved from honest struggle to complete surrender, declaring that the Father's will mattered more than His own comfort. This is one of the most important models of surrender in all of Scripture. Your feelings are real, but they are not final. Surrender does not erase difficulty. It hands difficulty to the One who is greater than it. Today, bring your honest struggle to God and follow it with trust.

Day 3: Open Hands Receive More

Reading: Romans 8:32

Devotional: God did not withhold His own Son. Romans 8:32 makes the staggering point that if God gave the greatest gift imaginable, He will not withhold the lesser gifts needed for a life of purpose. But receiving requires open hands. When your hands are gripped tightly around your plans, your

schedule, your reputation, and your comfort, there is no room to receive what God wants to place in them. Surrender is not about losing something. It is about creating the capacity to receive something far greater. Today, ask yourself honestly: what am I holding so tightly that God cannot give me anything new?

Day 4: Deny Yourself, Discover Your Life

Reading: Matthew 16:24-25

Devotional: Jesus makes a statement that sounds like loss but leads to gain. He says that those who try to save their own life will lose it, but those who surrender it for His sake will find it. You will never discover the life God created for you while spending your life protecting the life you created for yourself. The American dream, built entirely on self-reliance and self-protection, is a poor substitute for the God-designed life available through surrender. Today, reflect on whether you have been asking God to bless your plans or genuinely surrendering to His. There is an enormous difference between the two.

Day 5: Christ Living Through You

Reading: Galatians 2:20

Devotional: Paul describes a life so surrendered that Christ Himself becomes the animating force within it. This is not passive living. It is the most purposeful life possible, one where the eternal God directs every step. Surrender opens the door to purpose. When you stop gripping your own agenda and start walking in obedience, loving God and loving people, stepping through open doors and walking away from closed ones, life begins to look less like a struggle and more like a calling. Today, choose to live open-handedly. Not giving up, but giving over. Let God write the story only He can write.

Reflection Questions:

The sermon defines biblical surrender not as giving up but as trusting God more than you trust yourself. In what areas of your life do you find it hardest to trust God over your own instincts, and why?

Jesus in the garden acknowledged his struggle honestly before surrendering to the Father's will. How might your own prayer life change if you allowed yourself to be that honest with God about your fears and doubts?

Proverbs 3:5-6 calls us to trust God without requiring full understanding first. Can you think of a time when you waited to trust God until you had everything figured out, and what was the result?

The sermon draws a distinction between grace, which covers us when we do things our own way, and blessing, which comes when we do things God's way. How does this distinction challenge the way you typically evaluate whether things are going well in your life?

Mickey says you will never discover the life God created for you while spending your life protecting the life you created for yourself. What is one thing you are currently protecting that may be keeping you from experiencing God's purpose?

The sermon suggests that less than 10 percent of active believers live in a posture of daily surrender rather than asking God to bless their own plans. What do you think makes this kind of surrender so rare, even among committed Christians?

The concept of living open-handedly was introduced as a way to avoid gripping things so tightly that they cannot grow into something bigger. What relationships, plans, or ambitions do you tend to hold with a closed fist rather than an open hand?

Mickey points out that we can trust Jesus as Savior while still struggling to submit to him as Lord. What is the difference between those two postures, and which one best describes your daily relationship with God right now?

Galatians 2:20 describes a life where Christ lives in and through the believer. What would it practically look like for your daily decisions to reflect that reality rather than your own preferences and ambitions?

The sermon uses the image of hands too full to receive what God is tossing your way. If you were to honestly inventory what fills your hands right now, what would you find, and what might God be waiting to give you if you let go?