5-Day Bible Reading Plan and Devotional Guide

The Pull of Surrender: Giving Up the Choice to Be in Charge

Day 1: The Beginning, Not the End

Reading: Luke 9:23

Devotional: Salvation is the doorway, not the destination. Many people treat the moment they receive Christ as the finish line, when in reality it is the starting line. Just as a wedding day is not the end of a love story but the beginning of a life built together, your decision to follow Christ opens the door to something far greater than simply escaping judgment. The invitation in Luke 9:23 is not passive. It is a present, ongoing, active pursuit. Ask yourself today: Am I treating my faith as something I have already completed, or as something I am actively and daily building?

Reflection: In what ways have you treated your salvation as an ending rather than a beginning?

Practical Application: Write down one area of your life where you have been spiritually coasting. Commit today to taking one intentional step forward in that area.

Day 2: Denying Yourself in a World That Says You Deserve Everything

Reading: Romans 12:1-2, which describes the call to offer yourself as a living sacrifice and to resist being shaped by the patterns of this world

Devotional: Culture speaks loudly. It tells you to follow your heart, do what makes you happy, and that no one has the right to tell you how to live. But Scripture calls us to something radically different. Denying yourself does not mean you have no value or that your hopes do not matter. It means you have reached the point of recognizing that what God wants for you is greater than what you want for yourself. Not every desire should become a decision. Not every feeling deserves to be followed. One of the greatest signs of spiritual maturity is being able to say, I want this, but I want God more.

Reflection: What is one desire you have been following that may not align with what God's Word says is good for you?

Practical Application: Before making any significant decision this week, pause and ask whether that decision reflects your desires or God's direction.

Day 3: The Daily Decision

Reading: Galatians 2:20, which describes the reality of being crucified with Christ and no longer living for oneself but through the life of Christ within

Devotional: The word "daily" in Luke 9:23 is not accidental. Surrender is not a one-time transaction. It is a daily recommitment. Many of us are genuinely good at surrendering on Sunday. The challenge is whether that surrender survives until Monday morning. Every day carries its own temptations to take back control, to manage your own outcomes, and to lead your own life. Each morning is an opportunity to lay it all back down. Your pride, your attitude, your relationships, your finances, your future. The cross that Jesus described was not jewelry. It was a total commitment. Make that commitment again today.

Reflection: What did you take back from God this week that you had previously surrendered?

Practical Application: Each morning this week, ask yourself three questions: What am I trying to control today? What does God's Word say about it? What is one action I can take to demonstrate my surrender?

Day 4: Savior and Lord

Reading: Philippians 2:9-11, which describes how every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord

Devotional: There is a significant difference between making Jesus your Savior and making Jesus your Lord. Nearly everyone welcomes salvation. Far fewer welcome Lordship. Savior means he

rescues you. Lord means he leads you. You cannot genuinely call him Lord while refusing to let him lead. This is the tension at the heart of so many struggling marriages, broken relationships, financial stress, and restless hearts. The areas of your life where you feel the most stuck are often the areas where you are still most firmly in control. Lordship is not a threat to your life. It is the very thing that unlocks the fullness of it.

Reflection: In which specific area of your life have you welcomed Jesus as Savior but resisted him as Lord?

Practical Application: Identify one relationship, habit, or decision where you have been leading instead of following. Pray specifically over that area and ask God to take the lead.

Day 5: Surrender Opens the Door to Purpose

Reading: Jeremiah 29:11, which assures us that God holds plans for our welfare and our future, plans rooted in hope

Devotional: You will never discover the life God created you for if you spend your life protecting the life you created for yourself. Surrender is not loss. It is the very door through which purpose walks in. God is always calling us closer. The question is never whether he is pulling. The question is whether you will respond. Perhaps God has already shown you what needs to change and you have been waiting for it to feel easier before you obey. It will not get easier. But it will get better. Surrender today. Not because you have it all figured out, but because you trust the One who does.

Reflection: What has God already shown you that you have been putting off? What would it look like to obey today?

Practical Application: Close this week by writing a simple prayer of surrender. Name specifically what you are handing over to God. Keep it somewhere visible as a daily reminder that he leads and you follow.

Reflection Questions:

The sermon describes salvation as a beginning rather than an end, much like a wedding day marks the start of a marriage rather than its conclusion -- in what ways have you been treating your salvation as a finish line instead of a starting point?

Pastor Mickey states that you cannot fully follow Jesus while insisting on remaining in control of your own life -- where in your life do you sense the greatest tension between your desire for control and your desire to follow Christ?

Luke 9:23 presents three distinct elements of discipleship: denying yourself, taking up your cross daily, and following Jesus -- which of these three do you find most difficult to practice consistently, and why?

The sermon draws a distinction between converts and disciples, suggesting that many people embrace Jesus as Savior but resist him as Lord -- how would your daily decisions look different if you genuinely treated Jesus as Lord of every area of your life?

Pastor Mickey challenges the cultural messages of 'follow your heart' and 'do what makes you happy' by pointing to the biblical call to deny yourself -- how do you discern the difference between a desire that is God-given and one that needs to be surrendered?

The sermon suggests that many people never experience the fullness of life God promises because they remain in control, and asks, 'If you could fix it, do you really think you wouldn't have already fixed it?' -- what does your track record of self-reliance reveal about your need to surrender a specific area to God?

Pastor Mickey describes surrender as a daily decision rather than a one-time event, noting that many people surrender on Sunday but take control back on Monday -- what practical habits or rhythms could help you maintain a posture of daily surrender throughout the week?

The sermon distinguishes between feelings as authority and God's Word as a guide, arguing that many lives are governed more by emotion than by Scripture -- can you identify a recent situation where your feelings led you in a direction that conflicted with what you knew God's Word to say?

Pastor Mickey states that surrender is not measured by emotional responses during worship but by willingness to obey after leaving the worship service -- how does your behavior and decision-making from Monday through Saturday reflect or contradict what you profess on Sunday?

The sermon closes with the observation that you will never discover the life God created you for if you spend your life protecting the life you created for yourself -- what is one specific area where you sense God calling you to release control, and what is one concrete step you could take this week to demonstrate that surrender?