

An Interview with Barb Roose, Author of *Surrendered*



If COVID-19 has taught us anything so far, it's that we are not in control. When life gets hard, aspects of the future are uncertain, and we're at the mercy of other's decisions, we want more power over the situation. However, those are precisely the times when we need to learn how to surrender, just like Jesus did. In *Surrendered: Letting Go & Living Like Jesus*, Barb Roose leads readers in a study of Jesus in the wilderness to show that when our need to fix things takes over, that's when we need to embrace God's plans rather than our own.

Roose wrote the *Surrendered* Bible study for the weary woman who needs to let go of control-loving behaviors and learn to live like Jesus in the midst of the hard times or during the heartbreaking circumstances each person will face at some point in life. There are problems in life that can't be fixed no matter what we do, and living out the phrase "Let go and let God" is much easier said than done. She asks readers to consider if it is possible that giving up on what they can't change is God's path to peace for their life.

Q: There may literally be no better time for this specific Bible study to release! Tell us about the theme of your new study, *Surrendered*.

In light of what our world is experiencing right now, I would totally agree! Who knew that toilet paper would become the hottest commodity in America?

My new *Surrendered* study is written for the weary woman who needs to let go of control-loving behaviors and learn to live like Jesus in the midst of hard times or during heartbreaking circumstances that we all face at some point in life.

Q: *Surrendered* focuses on Jesus's time in the wilderness. How do you use the wilderness as a metaphor for the reader?

The wilderness is a spiritual symbol for those long, difficult and uncomfortable seasons in life. I've never heard anyone say, "Yes! I'm in a wilderness season. This is going to be great!"

Usually triggered by change, our wilderness seasons are often characterized by spiritual confusion or a long-lasting situation that seems to press the "pause" button in our life. Wilderness seasons are frustrating because there are no quick fixes and we often have no control over how long it will last or ultimately, how that hard situation will turn out.

Yet, the wilderness season is a beautiful invitation for us to experience God in new and powerful ways. As we travel through hard days or heartbreaking times, the wilderness is often a place where we experience God's might power, abundant provision and comforting presence in ways that we never have before.

Remember that both Jesus and the Israelites spent time in the wilderness. Jesus' forty days model for us how to live by faith during his wilderness seasons while the Israelites forty years teach us valuable lessons on what can happen when we allow fear to overrun our hearts in hard times.

Q: We're seeing a lot in the news about stockpiling due to future uncertainty. Let's talk more about God providing what we need for today, and how you began practicing your "Principle of Daily Bread."

I believe that God takes care of His children at all times, especially hard times!

When my adult children were young kids, I used to panic if I couldn't immediately repurchase or replace something that broke or ran out. One of the ways that I used control to push back against the panic was to join the coupon craze. I'd spend hours each week clipping coupons or printing them. I'd haul home handfuls of free toiletries or snacks and store them in a closet that I called "my stockpile."

However, a season of life came when I couldn't even afford the newspaper to clip the coupons. Eventually, my stockpile went away, and I hit a spiritual rock bottom. I began to reflect on Jesus' words in Matthew 6:11, "give us this day our daily bread" and realized that I'd placed my faith in a stockpile, not in God.

The "Principle of Daily Bread" means that I will trust that God will provide exactly what I need for the day in front of me. Like the Israelites had to wait for God to provide manna each day, I learned to wait for God to provide and stop letting the amount of food in my cupboard or the amount of money in my bank account, determine my level of peace or joy.

Q: What are the six surrender principles and when should they be used?

Letting go of control-loving behaviors isn't a switch that we can just flip. Rather, we need a new set of tools.

Those new tools are six Surrender Principles that we can activate and apply whenever fear flows through our hearts or we're tempted to flee, fix or force a solution. Each week, participants learn a new principle:

1. I am not in control of others or outcomes.
2. I choose to live by faith, not rush to follow my feelings.
3. I can always let go and give my problems to God.
4. Trusting God's promises will bless me, but pushing my plans will stress me.
5. When fear tempts me to flee, fix, or force my way, I will choose to stop and pray.
6. Surrender is my only path to God's peace, power, and provision.

Q: Why is it so hard to trust God to take care of us when he promises that is what he will do?

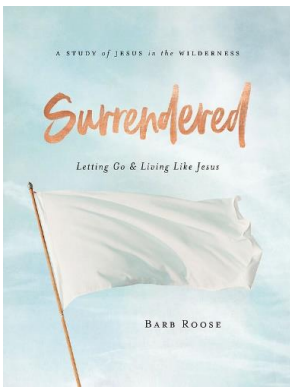
I don't know about anyone else, but I expect that God will do things like I would do them. So, when I've got a problem that I can't fix, and then God either seems to delay or doesn't seem to be doing anything about it, I get disappointed. I've learned that disappointment is often the doorway that leads to distrust.

However, Isaiah 55 reminds us that God's thoughts are higher than our thoughts and His ways are higher than our ways. So, in my experience, wilderness seasons have lasted a long time because it takes me a long time to let go of my expectations and learn to wait in anticipation.

Here's a big lesson for me: wilderness seasons have taught me to trust God's heart in hard times.

In fact, I introduce what I like to call the three "Wilderness ABC's" for when we're in a wilderness season or facing a difficult trial:

1. You are ALWAYS loved.
2. BELIEVE that God is for you.
3. CHALLENGE yourself to trust God and let go.



Q: What are some of the lessons that trials can teach us?

While some people may not agree, I'm not a fan of the saying that "everything happens for a reason," which many mistakenly believe is the message of Romans 8:28. When we try to apply earthly explanations to everything that happens, that approach could lead people to feel that God intentionally causes bad things to happen in order to teach a spiritual lesson. God doesn't do backhanded blessings.

However, God does redeem our trials when we keep our eyes on Him in the midst of what we're walking through.

Trials can teach us to worship God more, depend on ourselves less and to become more like Christ. Even though those lessons are tough to learn, the blessings that we receive during our wilderness season and on the other side is absolutely worth it!

Q: It's not a sin to be tempted, so why do we feel so much shame and guilt because of our temptations, after all, Jesus was tempted?

While it's not a sin to be tempted, we're often feel shame around the source of our temptation. Once we feel shame, silence and isolation quickly follow. Satan loves to show up in our spiritual isolation, but that's when his lies stick the most. As long as we're silent, we'll struggle against Satan's assault on our own—and that's dangerous for us!

However, Jesus showed us that we can find victory over temptation and avoid getting trapped in spiritual isolation by fighting back with scripture and relying on the Holy Spirit.

Q: We're all familiar with the old saying, "Be careful what you wish for because you just might get it." How can that apply to us in a spiritual context?

There have been a few times in my life when I used control-loving behaviors to get what I wanted, only to discover that my prize wasn't God's best.

In my early 20's, I wanted to buy a home. While I didn't have all of the resources that I needed, both in money and wisdom, I pushed forward and pulled out all the stops to buy that house. Even though it was a lovely home where I raised my family, there were many times over the years when expensive repairs and other home-owner related issues popped up as a consequence of forcing my way into a property that I probably should have asked a few more questions about.

More than 20 years ago, I began praying John the Baptist's prayer in John 3:30: "He must increase. I just decrease." Back then, my life wasn't perfect, but I had a great career, happy marriage and healthy children. However, my faith tended to fall behind everything else in my too-full-of-good-things life.

God has been answering that prayer in big and small, happy and heartbreaking ways. The most powerful way that God has increased in my life came as a result of a long-term addiction issue in my household that led to the devastating end to my 26-year marriage. However, I could see and feel God's power, presence and provision throughout that painful experience. He has increased in my life in ways that I am eternally grateful.

Q: What are some of the things we need to let go of in our lives?

The reality is that our hearts have to let go of the situations that we cannot control.

In the *Surrendered* study, I identify five control-loving behaviors (SHINE behaviors) that we need to let go in order to live like Jesus and experience God's power, peace and provision.

Those SHINE behaviors are Scorekeeping, Helicoptering (Micro-managing), Interrupting, Nagging and Excessive Planning/Stockpiling. When we use these behaviors in our attempt to control others or outcomes, we're shining the attention on ourselves and what we want instead of trusting that God knows what's best.

Q: What are the steps to letting go?

Letting go or surrender is a prayer and a process. Rather than identify steps, I identify four questions in the "Letting Go Loop" that equip control-lovers to not only identify their control-loving behaviors but also identify God-honoring and life-giving next steps toward letting go and living like Jesus:

- Awareness – Am I trying to control others or outcomes right now?
- Arrest – What do I need to stop trying to protect, fix, or force to make happen?
- Acceptance – Where do I need to acknowledge the reality that I do not have control, but God can handle it?
- FaithFULL Action – How can I show love, kindness and wisdom without control-loving behaviors?



As the questions are answered, the Letting Go Loop reveals where we need to open our hands and turn toward God instead of trying to fix or force the solutions for ourselves.

Q: How is *Surrendered* designed to be used? What other resources are available to groups?

I wrote the *Surrendered* study for the control-loving woman who is exhausted from trying protect what she loves, fix what's broken or trying to get everything in her life back on track. This six-week Bible study invites participants to follow Jesus' footsteps into the Judean wilderness and immerse themselves in studying how Jesus overcame those trials and temptations.

As I dream about the control-loving woman who knows that she needs to let go, I dream about a supportive community of friends who will take this journey toward surrender along with her. *Surrendered* is a study that should be experienced and shared with others!

The *Surrendered* Study includes a participant workbook, leader guide and DVD.

Q: What are the components of each week's study? Are there daily lessons too?

Each week's study includes specific letting go topics as well as application exercises and various. There are five lessons combining study of Scripture with reflection and application. As part of the study content, you'll find Extra Insights; a weekly Memory Verse; a Daily Surrender Prayer and short, memorable Surrender Statements to stock your Surrendered toolbox.

Throughout the study there are practical exercises that will provide you with real-time opportunities for reflection and create next-step action plans for your life, whether that might be working on a spiritual breakthrough, destroying a mental stronghold, or following through with a Spirit-led act of obedience that God may be asking you to do.

Each daily lesson should take about twenty to thirty minutes. These lessons will help you prepare for the discussion and activities of your weekly session, if you are meeting with a group. Though you can do the study individually and reap benefits, it is designed to be done with a group for encouragement, support, and accountability. As you gather to watch the *Surrendered* DVD, you also will have the opportunity to share what you are learning and pray together.

Each video message is designed to follow and complement the content that you have studied during the week. Whether or not your group watches the video, it's so helpful to share your struggles and victories in your journey to surrender. As you do, you'll encourage one another and find strength to complete the study and put into practice all that you're learning.

Ultimately, women can discover that the blessing of living a surrendered life is a healed heart, a calmer mind and open hands that willingly accepts or surrenders whatever God allows.

Q: What are some ways women can creatively come together to do the study as a group, even if they aren't able to meet in person?

While I hate the difficult circumstances that the COVID-19 outbreak has created around the world, but I love seeing how God dropped some opportunities in place before we realized that we needed them. Here are a few wonderful opportunities that are available during these wild times:

Here's some exciting news! One of the ways that I want to serve women in the midst of the virus crisis is to provide an online gathering for them to do the *Surrendered* study. So, I'm hosting the *Surrendered* Online Study beginning on April 22. I'll be doing live teaching on Wednesdays in a private Facebook group and then, Thursdays will be our group discussion day. I'm excited about this because many women can't meet with their groups, and I don't want that delay to keep them from experiencing the *Surrendered* study. More information is available at barbroose.com/onlinestudy/.

Here are a few other ways that women can experience the *Surrendered* study:

1. AMPLIFY – To help groups stay connected and continue to study the Bible together during this time of social-distancing, Abingdon Women and Amplify Media are making the video sessions of *Surrendered: Letting Go and Living Like Jesus* available for free for group members to watch at home from any device. Sessions will be available free of charge from April 7 to June 30, 2020.

View the video sessions at <https://my.amplifymedia.com/amplify/series/unitedmethodistpublishinghouse/32668-surrendered>.

Amplify Media is a streaming service allowing churches large and small unlimited video access in order to discover, customize, and share diverse resources that encourage deeper discipleship and equip churches to pursue their mission with greater impact. Learn more at AmplifyMedia.com.

2. DIGITAL DOWNLOAD – Each individual session of the *Surrendered* study is available for digital download at cokesbury.com/surrendered.

3. ONLINE GROUPS – I'm so encouraged and inspired by women's Bible study and small group leaders across the country who are so dedicated to leading their groups in these challenging times. I'm also a group leader at my church, too! Like many group leaders, our group is leveraging technology like Zoom, Facebook Groups and other platforms to meet together online.

Visit Barb Roose's online home at barbroose.com. Readers can also keep up with her on [Facebook \(BarbaraRoose\)](#), [Twitter \(barbroose\)](#), and [Instagram \(barbroose\)](#).