

The Method of Spiritual Control:

Spiritual Disciplines and Surrender

Spiritual control refers to the intentional and grace-empowered mastery over one's desires, thoughts, actions, and inner life in alignment with God's will. It is not about dominating others or forcing righteousness, but about yielding to the Holy Spirit and walking in freedom, obedience, and spiritual authority.

I. FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

1. Lordship of Christ

“If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.” – Luke 9:23

Spiritual control begins with full surrender to Jesus as Lord. There is no mastery of self without submission to Christ.

2. Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

“Walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.” – Galatians 5:16

The Holy Spirit is the source of spiritual control. It's not self-effort but Spirit-led cooperation.

II. THE TWO ARMS OF SPIRITUAL CONTROL

A. Spiritual Disciplines (Human Responsibility)

Spiritual disciplines are the practical means by which we cooperate with God's grace. They create the environment for transformation and Spirit-led control.

1. Prayer & Fasting

- Aligns the heart with God's will
- Suppresses fleshly impulses

“This kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.” – Matthew 17:21

2. Meditation on the Word

- Rewires thoughts and emotions with truth

“Be transformed by the renewing of your mind...” – Romans 12:2

3. Confession and Repentance

- Dismantles pride, promotes humility, and clears the way for divine direction.

4. Silence and Solitude

- Teaches restraint and attentiveness to God’s voice.

5. Service and Submission

- Trains the soul in humility, love, and obedience.

6. Accountability

- Invites correction and maintains discipline in community.
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B. Spiritual Surrender (Divine Empowerment)

While disciplines train the will, surrender releases the heart. It is the total yielding of your soul, plans, and desires to God’s purposes.

1. Daily Yielding

“Not my will, but Yours be done.” – Luke 22:42

Spiritual control flows from the cross of self-will.

2. Letting Go of Control

- Surrender is not passivity—it is trusting God’s sovereignty and obeying His timing.

3. Allowing the Spirit to Lead

- *“For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.”* – Romans 8:14

4. Resting in God's Grace

- Control in the Spirit is marked by peace, not anxiety.
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III. BALANCE BETWEEN DISCIPLINE AND SURRENDER

Discipline	Surrender
Active effort	Passive trust

Discipline	Surrender
Cultivation	Yielding
Structure	Flow
Resistance to the flesh	Receptivity to the Spirit
“I press on” (Phil. 3:14)	“I yield” (Rom. 6:13)

Spiritual control is not achieved by either discipline alone or surrender alone.

It's the *mystical union of both*—disciplining the body and mind, while surrendering the soul to divine guidance.

IV. MARKS OF SPIRITUAL CONTROL

- Peace in trials
- Restraint in speech and anger
- Clarity of decision-making
- Power over temptation
- Consistency in obedience
- Inner joy and freedom

V. APPLICATION: THE DAILY PRACTICE

Morning

- Surrender your will through prayer.
- Meditate on Scripture for spiritual direction.

Midday

- Practice silence or a short fast.
- Reflect on areas needing restraint or renewal.

Evening

- Confess, journal, and pray for the Spirit’s alignment for the next day.
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Suggested Study Scriptures

- Romans 8
 - Galatians 5
 - John 15
 - Psalm 119
 - Colossians 3
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Suggested Spiritual Growth Resources

- *“Celebration of Discipline”* – Richard Foster
 - *“The Spirit of the Disciplines”* – Dallas Willard
 - *“The Practice of the Presence of God”* – Brother Lawrence
 - *“Absolute Surrender”* – Andrew Murray
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A Leadership Training Module on the Method of Spiritual Control: Spiritual Disciplines and Surrender, designed for faith-based leadership development in churches, ministries, or movements.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING MODULE

Mastering Spiritual Control through Disciplines and Surrender

MODULE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this training, participants will:

1. Understand the biblical concept of spiritual control.

2. Distinguish between spiritual disciplines and spiritual surrender.
 3. Practice core spiritual disciplines that support leadership integrity.
 4. Embrace surrender as a leadership strength, not a weakness.
 5. Develop a personal spiritual control plan.
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MODULE STRUCTURE

Duration: 3 Sessions (2 hours each)

Audience: Faith-based leaders, emerging leaders, ministry team leads

Format: Teaching, discussion, personal reflection, and group practice

SESSION 1: FOUNDATIONS OF SPIRITUAL CONTROL

Key Scripture:

*“God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and **self-control.**”* — 2 Timothy 1:7

Topics:

- What is spiritual control?
- Why does leadership require it?
- Examples of spiritually controlled leaders: Jesus, Daniel, Joseph, Paul

Leadership Exercise:

- Personal assessment: “Where do I lack spiritual control?”
- Group discussion: “How does lack of self-mastery affect leadership trust?”

Practice:

- Guided prayer of surrender
 - Breath prayer: “Lord, not my will but Yours.”
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SESSION 2: SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES FOR LEADERSHIP CONTROL

Key Scripture:

“Train yourself for godliness.” — 1 Timothy 4:7

 **Topics:**

- Definition of spiritual disciplines
- The Big Six:
 1. **Prayer**
 2. **Fasting**
 3. **Bible meditation**
 4. **Silence & solitude**
 5. **Confession & accountability**
 6. **Service & submission**

 **Leadership Exercise:**

- Build a weekly “Discipline Map” (prayer, silence, reading, etc.)
- Accountability partners assigned

 **Practice:**

- 15-minute silence
- Scripture meditation: Psalm 1 or John 15

 **SESSION 3: SPIRITUAL SURRENDER AS LEADERSHIP POWER**

 **Key Scripture:**

“I have been crucified with Christ... I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.” — Galatians 2:20

 **Topics:**

- The myth of control in leadership
- How surrender deepens influence
- The power paradox: “Losing your life to save it” (Matt. 16:25)

 **Leadership Exercise:**

- Write your personal “Leadership Surrender Statement”
- Group role play: Leading with grace under pressure

 **Practice:**

- Guided group surrender prayer
 - Journal: “What am I still holding back from God?”
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 **MODULE RESOURCES**

Core Books:

- *Celebration of Discipline* – Richard Foster
- *The Spirit of the Disciplines* – Dallas Willard
- *Emotionally Healthy Leader* – Pete Scazzero
- *Absolute Surrender* – Andrew Murray

Templates Provided:

- Personal Spiritual Control Plan
 - Weekly Discipline Tracker
 - Surrender Reflection Journal
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 **FOLLOW-UP AND INTEGRATION**

- **40-Day Challenge:** Practice one discipline daily + weekly surrender journal
 - **Monthly Peer Circles:** Accountability, prayer, and reflection
 - **Certificate of Completion** (optional)
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 **OUTCOME GOALS**

Leaders will:

- Make Spirit-led decisions with peace
- Respond to pressure with grace

- Lead others into maturity and alignment with God's purposes
- Build credibility through integrity and restraint

FACILITATOR GUIDE: Mastering Spiritual Control through Disciplines and Surrender

SESSION 1: FOUNDATIONS OF SPIRITUAL CONTROL

Objective: Help participants understand the biblical foundation and necessity of spiritual control in leadership.

Preparation:

- Prepare Bibles for group use
- Print participant workbook copies
- Set up quiet room for prayer

Materials Needed: Whiteboard, markers, handouts, journal materials

Opening Prayer: 5 minutes

Teaching Time: 30 minutes

- Define spiritual control
- Examine 2 Timothy 1:7, Galatians 5:22-23
- Discuss Jesus' self-control under pressure (Matthew 4, Luke 22)

Group Discussion: 20 minutes

- Where do you see lack of self-control affecting leadership today?
- Which biblical character do you most relate to in this area?

Exercise: 15 minutes

- Personal assessment inventory: "My Control Gaps"

Spiritual Practice: 20 minutes

- Guided silent prayer on surrender
- Group debrief

Wrap-Up & Homework: 5 minutes

- Read Romans 8 and journal reflections
 - Memory verse: 2 Timothy 1:7
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SESSION 2: SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES FOR LEADERSHIP CONTROL

Objective: Equip participants with practical tools to cultivate discipline and strengthen spiritual maturity.

Preparation:

- Provide examples of discipline schedules
- Prepare Scripture meditation guide

Opening Devotion: 5 minutes (Psalm 1)

Teaching Time: 30 minutes

- Overview of the six disciplines
- Discuss training vs. trying (1 Tim. 4:7-8)

Workshop Activity: 30 minutes

- Build a Weekly Discipline Map
- Assign partners for accountability

Spiritual Practice: 20 minutes

- Practice silence and journaling: "What is God asking me to strengthen?"

Wrap-Up & Homework: 5 minutes

- Begin using the Discipline Tracker in workbook
 - Read John 15 daily
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SESSION 3: SURRENDER AS LEADERSHIP POWER

Objective: Lead participants to understand how surrender unlocks Spirit-empowered leadership.

Opening Scripture: Galatians 2:20

Teaching Time: 30 minutes

- Contrast control vs. surrender
- Study Jesus in Gethsemane (Luke 22:42)
- Power through weakness (2 Cor. 12:9)

Leadership Workshop: 25 minutes

- Write your Leadership Surrender Statement
- Group sharing

Spiritual Practice: 20 minutes

- Guided prayer walk: areas of resistance

Wrap-Up: 15 minutes

- Commit to the 40-Day Challenge
 - Plan peer group meeting dates
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PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK: Mastering Spiritual Control

Section 1: Foundations

- Key Scriptures to Memorize
- Reflection Prompts:
 - Where do I struggle with control?
 - What does Godly self-control look like in my role?

Section 2: Disciplines

- Weekly Discipline Tracker
- My Discipline Map Template
- Practice Logs (Prayer, Silence, Fasting, Scripture, Confession)

Section 3: Surrender

- Journal Prompts:
 - What am I afraid to let go of?

- My Surrender Statement
- Leadership Application Reflection

40-Day Challenge Chart

- Daily tracker for practice and reflection
- Weekly review notes

BIBLE STUDY COMPANION GUIDE

Week 1: Spirit of Power and Self-Control

- Text: 2 Timothy 1:7
- Questions:
 - What does this verse say about the Spirit within us?
 - What areas of fear hinder leadership?
- Group Activity: Share one fear and pray for one another

Week 2: Fruit of the Spirit – Self-Control

- Text: Galatians 5:16–26
- Questions:
 - How is self-control different from legalism?
 - How do we walk by the Spirit?
- Practice: Fasting or silence for 12 hours

Week 3: Jesus and Surrender in Gethsemane

- Text: Luke 22:39–46
- Questions:
 - How does Jesus model spiritual surrender?
 - What would it look like to pray, “not my will”?
- Group Challenge: Write a communal prayer of surrender

Week 4: Paul’s Thorn and God’s Strength

- Text: 2 Corinthians 12:7–10
- Questions:
 - How can surrender become strength?
 - What weakness is God redeeming in you?
- Practice: Write a personal surrender declaration