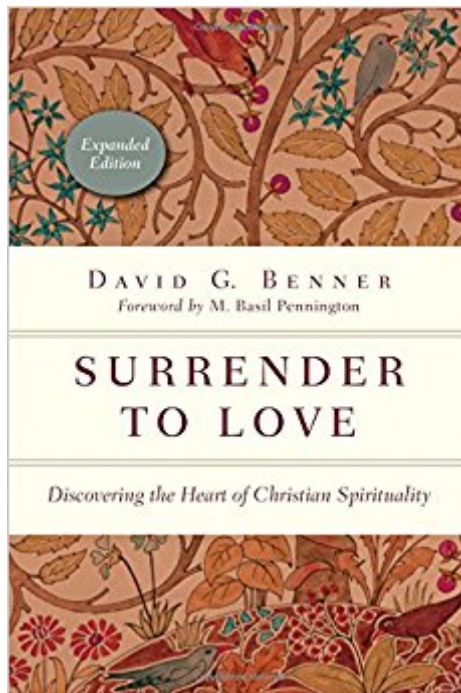




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# **Surrender To Love: Discovering The Heart Of Christian Spirituality (Spiritual Journey)**



## Synopsis

Bookwiser's Favorite Books of the Year, Non-Fiction "Only God deserves absolute surrender because only God can offer absolutely dependable love." In our self-reliant era, most of us recoil from the concept of surrendering to a power or authority outside ourselves. But surrender need not be seen as threatening, especially when the One to whom we surrender is the epitome of goodness and love. God doesn't want his people to respond to him out of fear or obligation. Rather, he invites us to enter into an authentic relationship of intimacy and devotion. And so God calls us to move beyond mere obedienceâ•by surrendering to love. In this profound book, David G. Benner explores the twin themes of love and surrender as the heart of Christian spirituality. Through careful examination of Scripture and reflection on the Christian tradition, Benner shows how God bids us to trust fully in his perfect love. God is love, and he intends for you to live in his love. Surrender to Love will lead you to an unexpected place, where yieldedness to God frees you to become who he created you to be. This expanded edition, one of three titles in The Spiritual Journey trilogy, includes a new epilogue and an experiential guide with questions for individual reflection or group discussion.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Surrender to Love by David Benner is one of my favorite spiritual books, so much so that it is an assigned text in our Transforming Community experience. With the addition of an excellent study guide, it becomes an even more effective tool for spiritual transformation." (Ruth Haley Barton, founder, Transforming Center, author of Life Together in Christ)"If love makes the world go around

then it's clear why the world isn't doing very well. The tragic reality is that most people don't know what real love looks like, and so they spend a lifetime living with a superficial caricature of the real thing. David Benner shows us that our willingness to cultivate an intimate love relationship with God is directly related to our ability to experience a rich and meaningful love relationship with another person. If you're tired of substitutes and want to go for the real thing, if you are ready to experience deep levels of companionship and connection, then *Surrender to Love* is for you." (Gary J. Oliver, PhD, executive director, The Center for Relationship Enrichment, and professor of psychology and practical theology, John Brown University)"I receive many books to review. This is one of the most beautiful, powerful and insightful books I have ever read. Dr. Benner shares his lived experience in a way that opens for the reader the possibility of a true transformation." (M. Basil Pennington, OCSO, abbot, Abbey of Blessed Mary of Saint Joseph, author of *Centering Prayer*)"The message, the intention, the reality of God-in-Christ is love. The simplicity and profundity of this truth has been written about and taught on over and over through the ages, but rarely so clearly and helpfully as in Dr. David Benner's classic, *Surrender to Love*. As I journey alongside others in their lives with God, and as I myself continue to learn the ways of God, *Surrender to Love* is an invaluable reminder of the depth and power of what it means to experience and abandon oneself to the fullness of Love. This newest edition does what I had not thought possible after recommending this book to others for nearly a decadeâ€•it makes encounter and surrender even more accessible to all who come thirsty to these waters. With the heart of a mystic and the mind of a scholar, Benner gently leads the reader not just to an understanding but to an experience of the strongest force in the universe: love. This book is nothing less than an experience of vulnerable authenticity that, if you let it, will lead you to surrender to, and true union with, God. If you are tired of reading the message of self-improvement cloaked in spiritual language, *Surrender to Love* will take you deep into the heart of real transformation in Christ. If you've picked up this book wondering what it's about or are longing for an experience of Love in the deepest parts of you, don't put it down. Instead, accept the invitation to learn the ways of love from a soul who has walked those paths before you and will lead you tenderly to the very places you long to go." (Tara M. Owens, spiritual director, Anam Cara Ministries, senior editor, *Conversations Journal*, author, *Embracing the Body*)"When it comes to love, ours is a culture of many words but not much wisdom. *Surrender to Love* invited me into deeper places of entrusting myself to the healing depths of God's love. What could be better? What could be more life-giving? I've often encouraged friends to read this little book. I extend the same invitation to you." (Alan Fadling, executive director, The Leadership Institute, author, *An Unhurried Life*)"My favorite David G. Benner books are his trilogy: *Surrender to Love*, *The Gift of*

Being Yourself and Desiring God's Willâ •and my preferred among these favorites is Surrender to Love. It was written in a very brief period of time and its long shelf life attests to the author's burst of inspiration. It is about the difference between white-knuckled obedience versus warm-hearted surrender in our attempts to live God's love." (Gary W. Moon, director, Martin Family Institute and Dallas Willard Center, Westmont College, author of Apprenticeship with Jesus)

David G. Benner (PhD, York University) is an internationally known depth psychologist, transformational coach and author whose life passion has been helping people walk the human path in a deeply spiritual way and the spiritual path in a deeply human way. Some of his books include Presence and Encounter, Spirituality and the Awakening Self, Sacred Companions and Soulful Spirituality. Pennington, O.C.S.O., is abbot of the Abbey of Blessed Mary of Saint Joseph and author of Centering Prayer.

Having read David Benner's later books first; all three of them make a good group, It just worked out that way for me and I loved them all. Desiring God's Will, The Gift of Knowing Yourself, and this one, Surrender to Love make a great trio. I am able to confirm with him that his writing is the truth. I now feel now I am on on a first name basis in that same experience of God's unconditional love. As His Love was filling my lost empty heart I could hardly believe it was happening, but it was. I am so grateful to God for touching my heart. It was and remains to this day, 38 years later, still such a uniting JOY, I KNOW from my own personal experience the JOY in sharing that same experience. Now we know both God and neighbor as well. I know that David's experience also confirms me. It will do the same for you as well; just confess to God completely who you really are, hold back nothing, empty the false you and receive from Him Life Eternal. Good News; it is true, It really is. Praise God. Perhaps the most revealing truth, so well covered in this beautiful book, is this; it is not in our own righteousness that we come into transformation, but rather it is in our brokenness, in our realization of emptiness. We can call upon Our Lord, not in a spirit of bargaining, but rather with our confession, with our broken and contrite heart. We are in no way deserving of the unconditional love of God.; As such, when He came to me, it was sheer JOY that I experienced, as His Love was filling my aching and empty heart. Now I just want to only be what He wants me to be. I am His and He is mine. We are connected unto God by His Love and neighbor as well in Christ Jesus our LORD and SAVIOR. That requires death to the natural inner man first, then and only then can anyone assume as the Gift of God, our true self in Him. 1st Corinthians 6:17. There are not enough words to express my Joy in knowing God, not just about Him. There is no easy way, only by sharing in His death in an

experiential death with Him, are we able "tot", not an error, tot really is a word, and in this case used as ( movement towards God as a small child ) as we really begin to know Him. This book is a classic. 5 star+, Read it until you understand the truth written therein.

I brought this book for a class that I was taking as Liberty University, Theology and Spirituality in Counseling. The book was an easy read. I was blessed by reading the book. I am planning on re-reading the book for more understanding in Spiritual Formation. Surrendering to God's love is Benner's approach that focuses on the transforming power of the love of God in a person's life. Benner's primary goal is the spiritual transformation of the individual that will lead the person to Christ likeness. Surrender, love, and spirituality are the themes of Benner's formula for change. God is the change agent that has the power to transform lives. God is love, and love is the strongest force in the universe (Benner, p. 10).

Benner once again creates a deeper more ethereal approach to spiritual maturity. The American evangelical church would have followers read more and more books and fill the mind with information about Christ. Benner's approach to transformation is much more attainable and realistic. While there will always be another "good" study for Christians to acquire there will always be only one way to become Christ-like, encountering the all-surrounding love of God.

Great book for a group study about God's love. There is so much to learn about God's love but we need to separate our own perceptions from what the Bible says. Not something we can earn but is freely given.

I believe that surrendered to love is one of the best books to understand God's love for human beings. This book is going to help you to understand God's love in a deeper way.

This is a wonderful book in a set of three that deserve to be read and re-read. The aspect of the LOVE of God and our need to surrender to his love is powerful. We can't "will" our way to "obedience." We must see God as the One who is love and find ourselves surrendering. The book moves deliberately, with care, bringing the reader to a place of personal prayer after every chapter. It is a book to be absorbed. It is a book to read while praying. It is a soft, gentle turning toward the One who loves us so deeply.

Recommended to all regardless of religion or lack of any because surrender and love are consonant with reality. Their integration is the Venn model described here.

For those of us who claim to be Christian, our understanding and experience of the gospel so desperately needs to be rooted in a biblical understanding of the love of God. Sadly, that seems to be lacking in so many of us. Even those of us who pastor others. This book was a powerful reminder of the simple and central truth of the gospel. Benner accomplishes his goal of offering something that truly helps us on the transformational journey of knowing God and being changed by the gospel in ways that reflect Him well.

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