

Sunday Word

NOVEMBER 5, 2017

NEWSLETTER

THE POWER OF CHOICE

PART 2

*Concede vs. Control*

We're a result of the choices that we've made in the past. And, the DECISIONS that we're making TODAY will determine who we become and what we're able to do TOMORROW. I'll encourage you to choose to concede to God rather than be a control freak. All of us battle with some area of wanting to CONTROL at work or at home. Some of you have this mindset: "Do it MY WAY in MY TIME. If you don't do it right, I'll do it myself." Whenever we're trying to control something that's not ours to control, it is a reflection of a really big spiritual problem. Whenever we're trying to control what we're not supposed to control, we are trying to be like God.

Proverbs 3:5-6 - "5 TRUST IN THE LORD WITH ALL YOUR HEART and LEAN NOT ON YOUR OWN UNDERSTANDING; 6 IN ALL YOUR WAYS SUBMIT TO HIM, and he will make your paths straight (NIV)."

We are to trust in the Lord, surrender to God. To be completely in His hands, we have to trust in the Lord with how much of our hearts? How much of your heart are you entrusting to God? We are to submit to Him everything. When we do that, we don't make our paths straight, but who does? God does. God will make our paths straight. The more that we try to control, the more that we are afraid of losing control. The more we're afraid of losing control, the more we try to control. Before long, we enter into this cycle of fear. Essentially we're removing God out of our life, saying, "God, I want to control this."

THREE BIG QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU ANSWER WHEN IS THE RIGHT TIME TO CHOOSE CONCEDE OVER CONTROL:**1.) IS IT WORTH MY CONCERN?**

In other words, there are many things that many people are really upset about. But actually it's not completely worth your concern. "Choose your battles wisely." Oftentimes, you need to fix a few things. But you should take advantage of what's working. Just put gasoline on the fire that's working and try to get that to burn even brighter. You've got a choice: You could have CONTROL or you could have GROWTH, but you can't have both. You have to empower people. Sometimes you have to let some things be a little bit different than what you would want them to be.

In relationship, you can have control or you can have intimacy, but you can't have both. The problem is sometimes we're getting so consumed about things that are not really a big deal, and we're hurting our relationships.

2.) IS IT MINE TO CONTROL?

Is it something I should do something about? Honestly, sometimes the answer is yes, right? How many of you know God won't do everything for you? God wants you to do some things yourself. There's a big difference between SURRENDERING CONTROL and RELINQUISHING RESPONSIBILITY. For example, if you're messed up financially, you don't just sit around going, "Okay, God's going to pay for my debts so I can rest." God's going to say to you, "I gave you two hands to feed. You go work. Don't spend so much. Spend less than you're making. Do something about it."

If your marriage is in trouble, what can you do? You can adjust your heart? You can examine yourself. You can suggest, "Maybe we should try counseling. We should be in a life group. We need spiritual connection with other believers. You want to do what it takes. You do what you can do in those situations. There are some things you should do. Ask yourself quite honestly, is it mine to control? If it is, then you do something about it. If it's not, we're going to ask ourselves the third question.

3.) IS IT GOD ALONE?

Is this one of those areas that I am trying desperately to control, but it's not mine to control? This one is for me to concede to God alone. In fact, in Philippians 4. These are the words of the Apostle Paul when he was chained to a Roman guard in a house arrest. He's in prison, and he wrote these powerful words. Philippians 4:6 - "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God (NIV)."

In every situation, what do you do? By prayer and petition, you present your request to God. Prayer is never a last resort. Prayer should always be the first line of offense and defense. What can we do? We can pray. Scripture says we can go boldly before the throne of grace. We have access to God. He hears our prayers. He's a God that says, "With me all things are possible." What can you do? You can pray. It's our first line of offense and defense.

Then, what happens when we go to God? Philippians 4:7 said, "And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus (NIV)." We experience SUPERNATURAL PEACE when we go to God. What do we do when there's something that we can't control? We say, "God, this one is actually Yours. I present this to you. I entrust it to you with all my heart. I am not leaning on my own understanding. In this particular situation and all my situations, I'm acknowledging you. I'm submitting to you.

I am praying that you would do something about this. God gives you a supernatural peace that goes beyond your ability to understand. People will be asking you, "How come you're so calm even in the midst your problems?" You'll just be saying, "I don't even know. If I look at my circumstances, I should be worrying, but I'm not. I just gave it ALL to God."

If you are fully following Jesus, you cannot be in control because you're going where He leads you. You want your life to count, let Him be the driver of your life.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- 1.) Do you control things to the point of anxiousness? Why?**
- 2.) What does being in control make you feel? More secure or tired and weary?**
- 3.) How can the lesson help you change your controlling ways?**

Pray for each other in your group.