

Session One Homework

Day One

Let's revisit our struggle for control compared to what God intended.

1. Read Genesis 1:27-31, 2:16, 25 and 3:8a
2. Based on these verses, describe what it was like for humankind *before* the fall.
3. Think about the phrase "naked and unashamed". What if God meant something other than just our physical state? Do you live a life that is "naked and unashamed" before God?
4. Read Isaiah 1:18. What does God promise to do with our sin?
5. Read Isaiah 61:1 and Luke 4:18. What did Jesus come for?
6. What attitudes or beliefs keep me from walking in this truth?

Today's prayer:

Lord, please be my freedom today. Walk with me as you did in the cool of the garden at the beginning of time. Let me experience a life that is naked and unashamed before you, because you washed my sins away.

Day Two – What? *Me* worry?

Let's think about Christ's offer to remove our anxiety – the anxiety that's often the source of our controlling behavior.

1. Read Matthew 6:25-34

2. List the things Jesus tells us not to worry about.

3. What we eat, drink, wear...kind of translates to life style and income doesn't it? Walmart or the Coach Store? Charmin or cheap stuff? Caviar or canned mackerel?

4. Which of these areas do you try to control? How?

5. What thoughts or activities keep you focused on the material instead of the spiritual?

6. Look at verses 33 and 34 again. What is Jesus' final admonition in this chapter?

Today's prayer:

Lord, help me seek first your kingdom today. Let me seek your righteousness and not my own.

When I am tempted to worry about my material possessions, or to control my life in these areas, correct my heart and remind me of what is important.

Day Three – Can I still have childlike trust?

Let's think about the simplicity of God's offer to us...Christ carries our burdens.

1. Read Matthew 11: 25-30

2. Is your faith still "childlike" or has a focus on doctrine or works or theology actually clouded your vision of Jesus' offer of freedom?

3. Look at verse 26 – what emotion does God have when we "get it?" When do we begin to see him for who he really is and understand his redemptive love for us?

4. Read verse 28 again. In what areas are you feeling weary or burdened? Might a tendency to take charge be making that oppression even worse?

5. Finally, look at verse 29-30. Imagine a team of oxen straining under a heavy yoke and pulling a weighty cart. Ever feel that way? What does Jesus promise though?

6. Does this mean that there is no yoke at all? Does this mean the burden goes away completely?

Today's prayer:

Lord, let me come to you with a childlike faith. I carry a yoke and I do have burdens but you can help me carry them. Please help me lean into you to lighten my load so I do not work so hard on my own.

Day Four – Will I Exercise My Ability to Choose?

As we close this week, let's think about our choices in this issue of control.

1. Read Deuteronomy 30:19-20

2. What are some of the choices before us?

3. What are some choices you face in your life right now, especially related to situations, people or circumstances you are trying to control?

4. What is the result if we choose God's way?

5. What are four demonstrations of that life lived out in God?

6. Read John 14:6 How does Jesus describe himself in this verse? What do you think about the three things partnered together in this description of Jesus?

Today's prayer:

Jesus I choose life. I choose you. I can't do anything on my own, but you can do all. Let me abide in your life today.