

Will I Give Up Control?

Step One: We admitted that we were powerless over our dependencies, that our life had become unmanageable.

Today I have given you the choice between life and death, between blessings and curses. I call on heaven and earth to witness the choice you make. Oh, that you would choose life, that you and your descendants might live! Choose to love the Lord your God and to obey him and commit yourself to him, for he is your life. Then you will live long in the land the Lord swore to give your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (Deuteronomy 30)

It is human nature to want to be (and to believe that we are) in complete control of our circumstances and our lives. But truly fortunate people come to a point in their lives when they realize this is definitely not possible or even desirable. These people are the fortunate ones because they have come to the end of themselves. Now they are free to go beyond the emptiness of their own resources, free to surrender trying to manage things on their own strength, and free to receive God's unlimited resources.

Trusting oneself is foolish, but those who walk in wisdom are safe. (Proverbs 28)

Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about what happens to you. (1 Peter 5)

For God has said, "I will never fail you. I will never forsake you." (Hebrews 13)

Am I willing to give up uncertainty and "planning in the dark?"

For those of us used to chaotic situations, our response may be to try to maintain control of something anything! We may become rigid and controlling of our children, or insist on having control in our homes or work relationships. We may choose to escape to mind numbing substances or habits to try to control the pain. It is understandable that we would want to develop a security system to protect our lives but we get trapped when we believe it's up to us to control life so we can cope. Life is uncertain. God invites us to "wake up" in each of our circumstances and to ask Him to show us His plans. God invites us to get connected to people who will

help us pray and think and choose for responsible ways to face our life situations. God invites us to trust His control and His provision as we put our hand in His. God is our Loving Father and He invites us to come to him as children, ready to trust, ready to learn, and ready to obey and act on what He shows us. That's life in an uncertain world. That's true stability.

Am I willing to give up despair and a hopeless view of my future?

There are times when we are so confused and overwhelmed by the pain in our lives that we wish we could die. No matter what we do, we are powerless to change things for the better. The weight of the sadness seems too heavy to bear. We can't see why our hearts just don't break and allow death to free us. God has promised us help and strength. God has promised to show us a way through our pain into abundant life. God does not lie. We must remember: life can be good again if I begin to make choices to know and do things God's way.

Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke fits perfectly, and the burden I give you is light." (Matthew 11)

For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. In those days when you pray, I will listen. If you look for me in earnest, you will find me when you seek me. I will be found by you," says the Lord. "I will end your captivity and restore your fortunes. (Jeremiah 29)

Questions For Reflection and Discussion

1. What do I do about the uncertainty of life?
2. What gives me balance when life and circumstances seem to be "out of control"?
3. Why do I hang onto the belief that I'm stuck with what I've got and have to control things the best I can?
4. How do I want to respond to God's offer for stability and hope today?