

Who's In Charge?

God created life and us for life. Sin and brokenness have entered our world and significantly impacted the way we live. The life of recovery that God invites us to is the original design for which He created us. God offers a clear description of what will work for us and what will harm us. God offers us relationship and power to live life through Jesus Christ. As we surrender ourselves and our broken, sinful ways to God, He removes the forces of death and destruction that have been dominating us and puts new authority and new structures in place that will nurture life and wholeness. The key issue is, are we surrendering our old ways for new ones?

There is no such thing as a self-directed life. We cannot pick and choose what we will have in life and what we will not have. The life of recovery offered to us by God is one in which clear guidelines are offered and clear consequences are described. To live for God is to choose to live within the healthy limits God describes and to intentionally stay away from all behaviours that God describes as harmful. To live for oneself, which makes us vulnerable to ongoing attacks from Satan, is to try to pick and choose which commands of God we will obey and which ones we will put aside or put off doing for awhile.

While recovery and healing are an ongoing process, it takes an ongoing decision of surrender to keep us in that process. If we choose our own will, we jeopardize our lives because we are choosing to live in rebellion which God calls witchcraft, and we open the door to this powerful influence of the devil. If we choose God's will, and stumble in doing it, we still need to repent but our hearts are still soft as we keep them open and willing to follow God's voice. He will forgive us. He will heal us. He will lift us up. So, the issue for me to consider is, am I living in rebellion or surrender?

The Big Book has great clarity in this matter: "Half measures availed us nothing. We stood at the turning point. We asked His (God's) protection and care with complete abandon We thought we could find an easier, softer way. But we could not. With all the earnestness at our command, we beg of you to be fearless and thorough from the very start. Some of us have tried to hold on to our old ideas and the result was nil until we let go absolutely."

(Big Book p.58)

Dear brothers and sisters, we urge you in the name of the Lord Jesus to live in a way that pleases God, as we have taught you. You are doing this already, and we encourage you to do so more and more. God wants you to be holy, so you should keep clear of all sexual sin. Then each of you will control your body and live in holiness and honor -- not in lustful passions as the pagans do, in their ignorance of God and his ways. Anyone who

refuses to live by these rules is not disobeying human rules but is rejecting God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you. God himself has taught you to love one another. This should be your ambition: to live a quiet life, minding your own business and working with your hands, just as we commanded you before. As a result, people who are not Christians will respect the way you live, and you will not need to depend on others to meet your financial needs. (1 Thessalonians 4)

God invites us to live each day carefully, giving respectful obedience to spiritual principles. We keep in mind that recovery is a life long process because it is a life long relationship with God, our Creator, through Jesus Christ. We need to live responsibly, working and living in dependence on God at all times. We need to be busy about working for God and giving of ourselves to make life better for others. When we become complacent and forget that fact, we set ourselves up for some kind of addictive behaviour. The Bible gives us a clear picture of what God wants us to be like. Will we give ourselves to God's way with complete abandon?

When I look at my daily living, who's actually in charge? Am I doing what I want, or even what I think works, and simply asking God to come along and help me? Or, am I looking and listening specifically to information that tells me what works and what does not work? Am I looking at the Bible? Am I seeking and listening to spiritual counselors? When my perspective and the Bible or the counsel of these Godly people differ, what do I choose?

Will there be tough choices? Of course. Will I always feel like doing the right thing at the right time? Hardly ever in early recovery. Will I need to reign in my thoughts and feelings and make myself surrender to what is good and right and new? Yes. Yes. Yes.

Actions definitely speak louder than words. What do my actions tell me about who is in charge of my life?

Your Heavenly Father already knows all your needs, and He will give you all you need from day to day if you live for him and make the Kingdom of God your primary concern. (Matthew 6)

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. What are the major challenges for me as I choose between what I want and what God wants?