

## Let Go and Let God

***“Let go of your concerns! Then you will know that I am God. I rule the nations. I rule the earth.” (Psalms 46:10 GW)***

Every morning you wake up you have a choice... Do I surrender control of my life to God and trust him or do I spend the day controlling my life myself? Am I going to let God rule my life? Do I trust him enough? Will I surrender my will?

Every time we make the choice we choose to either walk in faith or walk in fear. How many people here this morning know that the choice is not an easy one? It is one of the most difficult things for a Christian to do. It comes down to trust... Do we trust God knows what is best for us? Are we afraid to let go and let God or are we so hurt that trust, even trusting God comes hard for us?

This choice is a battle... It is a battle for your heart. It is a battle for your mind. It is a battle for your soul. The enemy wants to destroy you... Do we hold on because of fear or pride?

Proverbs 16:18 - Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.

Why do we have pride? Pride has its root in the fear of lack of acceptance... It all comes back to a choice between fear or faith.

That choice is a battle. There may be things in your life that you want to control. You may want to make your own rules. But stress relief always starts with letting God be in control. It always starts with saying, God, I'm giving up control, because you can control the things that are out of control in my life far better than I can.

I don't know what is going to happen in your life today, this week, this month, this year but then neither do you... There is someone who does. God knows every possibility and he won't interfere with your choices, but if you ask him, he will direct your steps. You want less stress, you want more peace, let God direct your steps.

If you feel that your life is out of control, most people will react in one of two ways... Either you will try harder to control it or you will give up.

When the going gets tough the tough get going... or why bother... This is the world's smallest violin and it's playing just for me (rub finger and thumb together)

Either you are Cleopatra, you know the queen of d'nile and you go on ruling what you cannot control or you are the ultimate victim and host of your own pity party.

So... in your life will you be over controlling or will you be the victim?

I am here to tell you today that both choices are fear based... whichever way you go you are still choosing fear... Control is not the answer. Giving up is not the answer. Surrendering to Jesus and letting him walk with you and guide you through your life is the solution. It's a narrow road and few find it...

Ever feel stressed. The number one reason is that what you are doing is in conflict with Gods will. Now there are stresses and things in life that we all endure. The secret here is too not endure them but to give them to God. In many cases we are trying to control what only God can control.

I used to stress about every conversation I had during a day. I would go home, self-recriminate, and beat myself up over the way I said something or how I believed it would be perceived. I am not talking about conflict situations, but every conversation. I would condemn myself, I would pick apart how I handled the situations, I would grieve over hurts I might or might not have caused. But people, I have no control over how someone reacts, I have no control over their perceptions, I have no control over their actions. I would put myself into a depressive state because I feared how my interactions with the other person would be perceived. I began to avoid social situations and shut down. I would not express an opinion or make a suggestion. Why because I became afraid of interaction with others. I was in a snare of the enemy.

God showed me that I cannot control my job, I cannot control my wife, I cannot control my kids, I cannot control my past, I cannot control my future. I came to realize that control in my life was an illusion except for one thing. I have the right to choose to walk in fear or I could choose to walk in faith.

I came to realize that I was trying to play God. I was essentially trying to be my own saviour. I became exhausted in trying to control my life. I went through several cycles of fear. I bore down and tried harder. I bore down and tried working smarter at my life, I became a victim to my own indomitable spirit. I became broken, reclusive and gave up. On the inside... If you were looking at me from an outside perspective, I was driven, I had it together and my life was great. But I was in a hell on earth of my own making.

Others I have seen struggle with this... In some cases, when they have gotten to the point where they don't value themselves or their own choices, they begin to validate themselves through the opinions of others... yet another dangerous trap of the enemy to bring you down and once again a choice based on fear.

Finally you get to a place where you pray:

Lord help me to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference.

I came to a place where I learned to ask God's counsel, to seek his wisdom, to hear his voice.

At this point I discovered that I might not have liked what he had to say, so I chose not to do it... I took back control and did it my way... Ever been there?

Eventually I learned that obedience is better than sacrifice and so I learned to not just hear the voice of God but to listen and obey.

I came to understand what Paul said in Philippians 4:11: "I am not complaining about having too little. I have learned to be satisfied with whatever I have. I know what it is to be poor or to have plenty, and I have lived under all kinds of conditions. I know what it means to be full or to be hungry, to have too much or too little. Christ gives me the strength to face anything."

Jesus became my strength. In Matthew 11:28-30 Jesus said: "If you are tired from carrying heavy burdens, come to me and I will give you rest. Take the yoke I give you. Put it on your shoulders and learn from me. I am gentle and humble, and you will find rest. This yoke is easy to bear, and this burden is light"

Others are unhappy because they try to do things for God, which he never asked them to do in the first place. They are still choosing fear. I won't surrender to God, but I will let others think I am Godly because I am doing Godly things.

Jesus prayed and he walked in the will of the Father. It is not about looking righteous or playing at church-ianity it is about walking as a disciple of Jesus and obeying the will of the Father.

Okay so now to practical terms... How do I do this...

Two weeks ago I spoke about how to hear from God and know that it is God. Today I will continue with a few more tools to add to your belt.

Don't believe everything you think...

How many people here know that we all suffer from a mental illness? It is called "Sin" and it is insidious because we all trust our own opinions...

Jeremiah 17:9 tells us: "The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?"

You can lie to yourself and believe it...

I have heard over and over again people get confused between the positional righteousness the Jesus has imputed to us. We are still walking a restorative

path of sanctification. Don't believe me. Turn with me to 1 John 1:8: "If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and truth is not in us."

It is time as a church that we drop the persona's and shells we put up around ourselves and be authentic. The world has seen way too much of Christians pretending and not really walking out their faith. If you don't think they can see it you are fooling yourselves.

Now I said we can't always trust ourselves. It is not my intention to instill a neurosis on each of you. Rather I believe that we need to self-evaluate.

- We all see things from our own perspective
- We all have blind spots in our lives
- We don't always stop to think
- We tend to place labels on people
- We tend to make judgements based on our own experiences
- We don't know or don't see the big picture
- We don't have all the details
- We see what we want to see and hide the rest.

We are conditioned to be this way; we feed our minds garbage all the time

So let me ask this question... What are we feeding ourselves. Proverbs 15:14 (CEV) "Anyone with good sense is eager to learn more, but fools are hungry for foolishness"

The NLT says: "A wise person is hungry for truth, while the fool feeds on trash."

Still don't believe my assertion. Let me ask another question...

How many people know that eating sugar is bad for you?

How many people still have sugar in their diets?

Let's turn to 2 Corinthians 10:3-6 "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to

the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled."

What is Paul telling us here when he speaks of strongholds?

He is talking about experiences in our lives that prevent us from fulfilling our potential in God.

What is Paul saying when he talks about casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God.

In one aspect, I believe he is talking about us placing our own rational arguments and desires about what God wants.

When Paul speaks about bringing our thoughts into captivity to obedience to Christ, what is the lesson?

We are to place our will and control aside in favour of what the Lord wants for us in our lives, trusting that he knows what is best for us.

When he speaks of being ready to punish. He is speaking of those who remain rebellious.

Are we ready to really follow Christ? Can we give up fandom and become disciples. Can we discipline ourselves to obey God and what he has told us in his Word? Moreover, do we trust him enough to let go and let God handle our lives for us?

I have often seen the bumper sticker. "God is my co-pilot." Today I stand before you and declare from experience that if God is your co-pilot, move over your in the wrong seat!

God has said in Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Do we believe it today?

What does faith require?

James 2:14 tells us that faith without works is dead... What are the works that are required of this faith? We have to let go! We have to let God!

I sound like a broken record, but there is a reason for it. Reading and prayer is the answer. God tells us in Philippians 4:6 "Don't worry about anything, but pray

about everything. With thankful hearts offer up your prayers and requests to God.”

You want peace... Let go and let God!

Fill yourself up with God’s Word, fellowship with his people, apply his principles and live happy

The key is to study and learn who your God is. Get to know him. Learn to hear his voice. He tells us in John 10:27 that his sheep hear his voice.

I am not ashamed to say this morning in front of you that growing churches require growing pastors. If we are not on the journey together they we are deceived. Pastors have not arrived, they have in many cases just studied the Word of God more and perhaps surrendered more. I am speaking to you this morning from experience. I have walked the valley and am delighted to have come through it. I want to share with you how... I but one person hears my voice and the call of the Lord on their life and finds the truth of God and relationship with him over a religious based observance, my obedience is fruitful.

The bible tells us in 2 Timothy 2:15 that we have a need: “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

Proverbs 10:14 (ASV) tells us: “Wise men lay up knowledge; But the mouth of the foolish is a present destruction.”

Proverbs 18:15 (CEV) tells us: Everyone with good sense wants to learn”

Proverbs 18:15 (ICB) shows us even more: “The mind of a smart person is eager to get knowledge. The wise person listens to learn more.”

If we say that we believe in the bible and we say that we have faith, what are we actually saying? Faith requires action. Are we applying in obedience what we are learning or are we in fear of change in ourselves? Is there a gap between our knowing and doing?

I would assert that there is... It is sin... Do we then try harder? Do we give up? No we need to give it to God and ask him for his help because we are all on the journey from fear to faith.

We need to let go and let God!

Do you want to be a complete Christian? Do you Love Jesus? Do you want peace?

Ephesians 11:19 tells us:

“Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people. Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel,

Will you pray with me this morning that God will help us all to let go and let him have the control of our lives?