



OUT OF
CONTROL

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SESSION ONE

The Problem Of Control

Do you know anyone who always has to be in control? We love being in control ourselves, but it drives us crazy when other people are control freaks. Why is it bad for them but good for us?

Feeling like we have to control everything, and that everything is riding on us, results in stress, pressure and anxiety. We think we want to be in control, but we don't. In reality, we have a problem. We have a problem trusting God, trusting others and letting go of the idea of control.

In Matthew 11:28, Jesus says, "Come to me all who labor and are weary, and I will give you rest." If we find ourselves overworked and fatigued, he promises to give us rest, but we have to let go of control and trust God.

Discussion Questions - Session One

Watch the discussion video. (youtu.be/Fj8uRts_mWA)

What stood out most to you in this video?

Read Matthew 11:28-30.

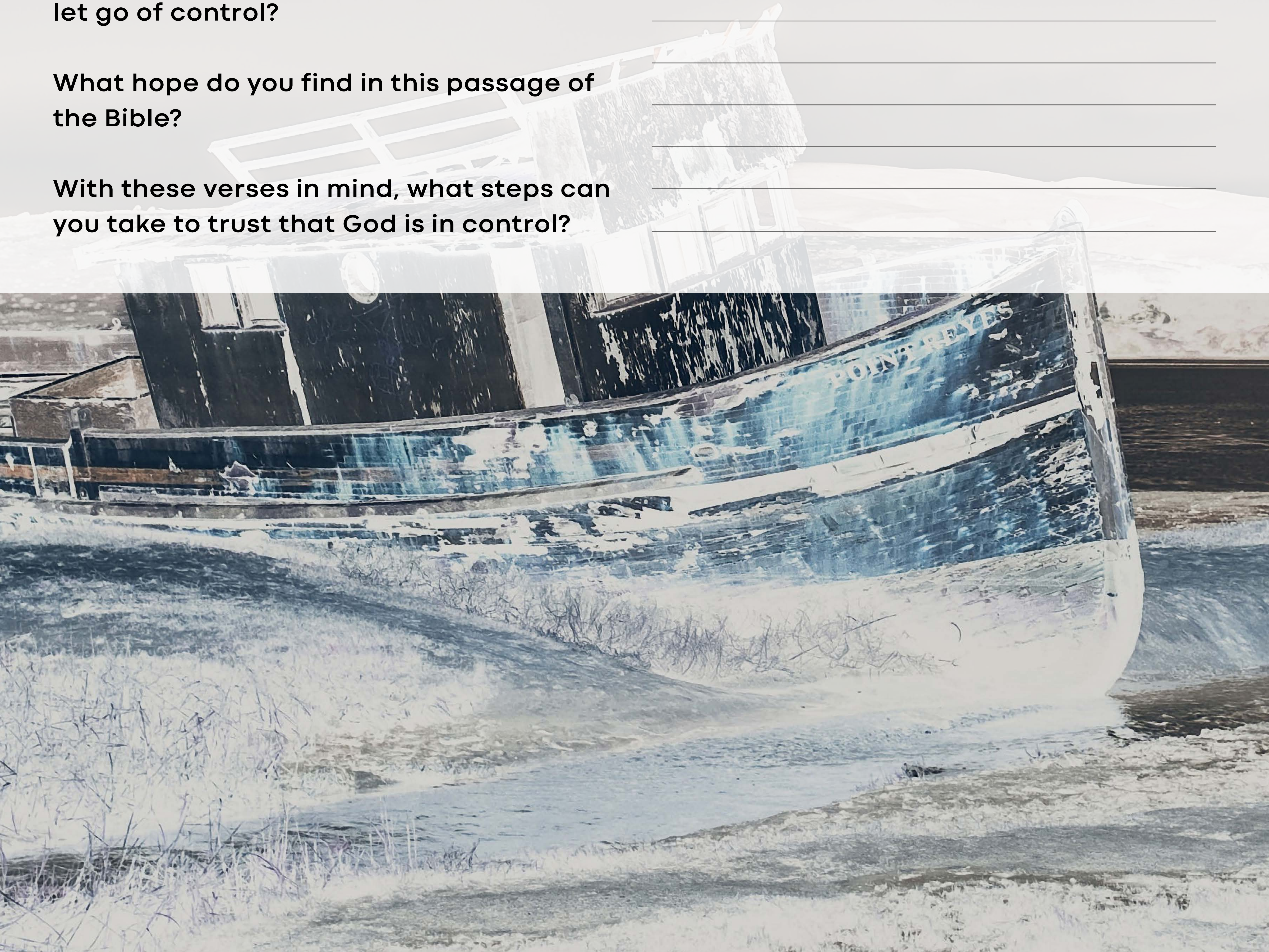
What problems does it cause in life when you have to be in control?

When was a time when you felt out of control?

In what area of life do you wish you could let go of control?

What hope do you find in this passage of the Bible?

With these verses in mind, what steps can you take to trust that God is in control?



SESSION TWO

The Illusion Of Control

God never gave his children control. We often think that we have control of our finances, health and families, only to realize all too quickly just how out of control we really are.

There are many places in the Bible where it speaks about the lack of control we all possess, despite our best efforts. One such story is found in Luke 12. Jesus tells a story of a rich man who epitomized control, only to lose it all in the end. This man appeared to have control, yet he met the same fate that the rest of us will. We often fear the loss of a job or relationship, but if we're honest, what we really fear is losing control. When chaos is around us, we are reminded that we don't really have control of the situation. And if we don't have control of the situation, what else don't we have control over?

The Bible never tells us to have control. It calls us to have faith. God wants child-like faith, not adult-like control. You were never meant to have control. Control is just an illusion.

Discussion Questions - Session Two

Watch the discussion video. (youtu.be/6dB0ey0GK8c)

What stood out most to you in this video?

How do the truths about God's nature change the way you view the areas of your life that cause stress?

Read Luke 12:16-21.

What are some areas of your life where you are tempted to feel you have control?

Give an example of a time in your life when you were leaning on something that ultimately let you down?

Discuss the problems that come about when you put your faith and trust in something other than God.

Has God ever used your out-of-control moments to for his purpose?

SESSION THREE

The Solution For Control

If you have ever had a child, you probably understood pretty early on that they want to be in control. They want to eat at 3 a.m. They want to wear only their pajamas, all day, every day. They want the toy another kid has, even though they have 20 other options. We were no different. We wanted control as children and, as adults, we still desire to be in control.

Paul tells us in Philippians not be anxious about anything. In other words, let go of control. Letting go of control may be one of the hardest things we try to do, but it can also be the most freeing thing we can do. As believers, we believe that God not only spoke the world into existence, but that he also gave us our first breath and lovingly gave himself up for our salvation. So, if he can make all those things work, he has shown that he is trustworthy and completely capable of guiding and directing us in our daily lives.

The hardest part of this is the letting go. We can know all of this, and we can even teach it to others, but when it comes down to making hard decisions, or even just to simple daily worry, letting go seems almost impossible. Our thinking often boils down to: If I let go, will God do what I want? Instead, we need to change our thinking to: When I let go, God will do what he wants. There is nobody else we would rather have in control.

Discussion Questions - Session Three

Watch the discussion video. (youtu.be/AOjsldw8c0U)

What stood out most to you in this video?

Read Philippians 4:6-7.

As followers of Jesus, as people who have trusted him with our salvation, why is it so hard to allow him to be in control?

When was a time when you were the most worried?

What causes you to worry the most?

Has there been a time when you were at a low point and felt like worshipping God was difficult?

Has there ever been a time when you let go of control and saw God's plan come through?

In the video, Casey and Paul talked about praying, worshiping and guarding your heart as solutions to feeling out of control. Do any of these come naturally to you? Which ones are the hardest for you?

SESSION FOUR

Remembering God's Faithfulness

The act of being in control is something that we have all experience at some point in our lives. Whether it was something as complex as controlling our finances to make sure we could afford the things we wanted, or as simple as controlling what we would watch on TV on a given night, we have all felt in control. Those issues are things that we can grasp, that we can see right in front of us. But what happens when things don't seem to go our way? Do we realize that only our creator is truly in control, or do we bear down and try to keep it in our hands? The illusion of being in control is a scary place to be, as it is only God who is in full control of all things. Take this time to remember when he has been in full control of your life.



Discussion Questions - Session Four

Watch the discussion video. (youtu.be/hZW8AFCW8T8)

What stood out most to you in this video?

Read Matthew 14:22-33.

Have you ever experienced a time when things were going really well spiritually, but an unforeseen circumstance came up that rattled your faith?

How did you see God work through that time?

What are some moments when God has been faithful to you?

As you look towards your future and the dreams you have, what are some ways that you can remember to keep your trust in God as they start to come to fruition?

How often do you share your stories with others around you to encourage them through their times of struggle?



SESSION FIVE

Faith in the Storm

In Texas, we know that summer storms can come out of nowhere. These storms are fast and furious, and when they hit, they hit hard. In Mark 4, we find Jesus asleep on a boat with his disciples when a storm hits them, seemingly out of nowhere. In a panic, the disciples ask in verse 38, "Teacher, do you not even care that we are perishing?" Jesus answers their question with his own questions: "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?"

In the midst of our struggles, it's easy to believe that God doesn't care. When life is out of control, we can convince ourselves that the one who cares the most doesn't care at all. But Jesus reminds us we can have faith in the one who is in control of everything.

Discussion Questions - Session Five

Watch the discussion video. (youtu.be/TM1r_BgleBU)

What stood out most to you in this video?

Read Mark 4:35-41.

The disciples were terrified because they were in the middle of a storm, and they felt like Jesus should've be doing something to save them, but instead, he was sleeping. Has there been a time in your life when you were going through a storm, and you felt like Jesus was asleep?

During that time, what did you think God should have been doing to save you? What did he actually do?

Often it's not until we are out of the storms that we can look back and see that God was actually in control the whole time. When was a time in your life that, looking back, you can see that God was working, even though it did not feel like it at the time?

How does that experience or hearing stories like that encourage your faith?

Based on your past experiences or the experiences of your friends, do you think God is trustworthy? Why or why not?

When you're in the middle of the storm, it's easy to be scared and think you are not going to make it. Even so, you often end up better because of it. How have you grown in the midst of a storm?

GROUP LEADER RESOURCES

Starting a New Group

Here's some practical advice from Nick Edwards for starting your own Community Group.

CLICK HERE (youtu.be/0n0mYzdMYSc)

Presenting the Gospel

In this video, Blake Clickner provides everything you need to know in order to share the gospel with someone in your group.

CLICK HERE (youtu.be/c9hb07qJrHs)

Leaders vs. Teachers

Here, Joe Paris highlights one of the most common pitfalls that can occur for group leaders, as well as how to avoid it.

CLICK HERE (youtu.be/JvZFBGUMAcE)

Leading Discussion by Subgrouping

In this video, Blake Clickner shares a great technique to encourage deeper discussion in your group.

CLICK HERE (youtu.be/B4uEe1xemyo)

Everyone Has a Role

Joe Paris explains how the healthiest Community Groups are the ones where responsibilities are shared.

CLICK HERE (youtu.be/sB40Glri1po)

