



Control Issues

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Q—Do you consider yourself a control freak?

You may be a control freak if . . .

- ✓ You believe that if someone would change a couple things about themselves, you'd be happier.
- ✓ You micromanage others to make them fit your expectations.
- ✓ You judge others' behavior as right or wrong and passive-aggressively withhold attention until they fall in line with your expectations.
- ✓ You offer "constructive criticism" as a veiled attempt to advance your own agenda.
- ✓ You present worst-case scenarios or are the "devil's advocate" in an attempt to influence someone away from certain behaviors and toward others.
- ✓ You have a hard time with ambiguity and being OK with not knowing something.
- ✓ You intervene on behalf of people by "rescuing" them so you can feel better.
- ✓ Instead of just being yourself, you attempt to create a different image so others will be impressed by you.
- ✓ The person you most try to control is yourself because you are your own worst critic.

Mark 8:35 (The Message)

Today's Core Truth: The ultimate test of faith requires relinquishing control.

Hebrews 11:8 (NIV)

Sarai = Contentious or my ruler

Genesis 15:1 (NLT), Genesis 15:5-6 (NIV); Genesis 16:1–2-4 (NIV)

Q—Who or what is your "Hagar?"

Three "Control" Questions:

⇒ Is it worth my _____?

Luke 10:41–42 (NIV)

⇒ **Is it mine to _____ ?**

Prayer for Serenity:

*God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.*

⇒ **Is it for God _____ ?**

Genesis 22:12-14a (NIV)

Q—Who or what is your greatest concern that you need relinquish control over, in order to lay it on the altar today?

ANSWER KEY: concern, control, alone



Study & Discussion for Your Next Small Group

Theme: *Your One & Only*

Warm Up: Who do you admire in history or personally that made a great sacrifice, and why do you look up to them?

Sermon Response: What was a “take-away” you received from Sunday’s message? Which signs of being a control freak could you personally

identify with?

Read: Genesis 22:1-18

Discuss:

- What types of emotions does this story stir up? What bothers you most about it?
- Knowing Abraham waited 25 years for God to provide a son, how would you expect Abraham to react to God’s instructions? What do you think were his feelings and Isaac’s feelings as they walked up the mountain?
- Do you think Abraham would have actually killed his son if God didn’t intervene?
- What do you think God desired for Abraham as a result of this test?
- What do you think Isaac learned from this experience?
- How was Isaac a foreshadowing of Jesus? How is verse 8 prophetic? How is Jesus, called the “The Lamb of God”, like the ram?
- When have you sensed God calling you to sacrifice your “one and only”? At what expense to you and others? What was the result? How did it change you based on your obedience?
- What in your life - past or present - do you need to relinquish control over, in order to follow Jesus more fully? How could you use prayer for that?

Pray Together (or in smaller micro groups)