

# Wednesday Night Bible Study

## November 4, 2020

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### Main Study

Engaging in silence is one of the purest ways of giving up control and letting God take it.

The level of anxiety you feel is in direct proportion to the level of control you think you have (or that you think you're losing) over the life you think you're living.

- The more you think you control, the more anxious you will feel about it.
- The more you give up control, the more your anxiety will subside
- This anxiety reveals possible blind spots in your life that you were unaware of.

God's mission all throughout the Bible is to remind His people that they are not in control and He is.

- Adam and Eve
  - God gave them everything except one thing. Eating the fruit was about them taking control where they should've relinquished it.
- Abraham
  - God gave him multiple tests to help him develop the reflex: "God, you've got this. I don't."
- Joseph
  - Felt like the apple of his father's eye with all the control. God stripped it from him and then taught him *trust*.

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- Israelites
    - 40 years in the wilderness was an exercise in relinquishing control. They had control of *nothing*. They preferred the tiny amount of control they had in slavery to the absolute trust they had to have in God in the desert.
    - They were used to working seven days a week. So when God commanded them to work only 6 days a week, that was *another* step toward relinquishing control.
  - Jesus
    - In His humanity, He was like us in every way--except without sin.
    - He relinquished the control He'd had for eternity and invited disciples to follow Him--to learn how to do exactly the same things He was doing.
    - Praying in the garden, He said, "Okay, God. I know the end result. Is there any way we can go a different direction and get there?" But He followed it with "Nevertheless, not my will, but your will be done."
    - His final act on the cross was a full relinquishing of His spirit.

How much of the anxiety you feel is because you're afraid of the life you have now will change? Or that it won't change?

Persecution and challenges in the Bible...and how God uses them as a means to advance the Gospel:

- Acts 4:1, 5:14-15
- Acts 8:1
- Acts 11:19

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- When the first century believers preached the gospel and they *weren't* persecuted, they were amazed. They expected persecution.
  - When we speak the Gospel and we're persecuted, that's when *we're* amazed. We expect the opposite.

Whenever we're fearful, that's an opportunity for us to demonstrate faith. Fear and Faith cannot coexist--you have to decide on one of them.

- *Fear* and *work* and *job* and *stress* fill up your cup to the brim.
- Silence and Solitude are a way we can *relinquish* what's in our cup.

Philippians 3:19-20

- We are only here for a short season of time, which Scripture calls a *vapor*. This place is not our home.
- What if we waited eagerly for the return of Christ like we wait for election results to update?

Philippians 4:6-7

- This isn't about us *doing* something, it's about us being aware that God is the disseminator of good things. This means that you pray, knowing that whatever happens after you pray, you're okay with it.
- Sit with the Lord and ask, "Lord, why am I so fearful?"
  - At the bottom, after all of the subsequent "why"s, the answer will likely come down to: "Because I don't trust You enough."

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James Finley, a disciple of Thomas Merton, said (something to the tune of):

*You need to relinquish the control you think you have over the life you think you're living.*

Sit with the following question this week:

*What is your deepest desire in life?*