

Sermon Series FREE: Week Four

“FREE* From Control”

Pastor Dale Campfield – Eastgate Community Church

March 14th, 2010

Intro:

Matt 28:19 “Go and make disciples of all nations...”

ECC Process of Discipleship: Making an IMPACT...To Love...To Grow...To Serve

We have 3 priorities – To love...which is expressed in our Sunday morning celebration and connection groups. To grow...which is expressed in our Path to Discipleship. To serve...which is expressed in our daily lives in the places we live, work and play; as well as through the local church. The vision of E.C.C. is to gather together weekly for corporate worship, loving God and each other; then to come together in small Connection Groups for discipleship and fellowship, and are regularly involved in reaching out to others with the love, acceptance, and forgiveness of Jesus Christ through community outreach. To Love...To Grow...To Serve!

This sermon series is different in the respects that we are joining with close to 90 churches in the Cincinnati, Northern Kentucky area to all teach on the same theme of being FREE! Every church will teach their own thing, but we'll all be on the same theme throughout the next four weeks.

You are encouraged to follow along with your personal journal as well as to meet with a small “FREE GROUP”; a small group of other believers who will meet together once a week for the entire six weeks. You can pick up a study guide at the Norlyn Manor.

2 Corinthians 3:17

“Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is freedom.”

Ps 119:45

“I will walk about in freedom, for I have sought out your truth.”

Galatians 5:1

“It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.”

This 4th week of the Free Journey is called:

“FREE* From Control”

Question: “Who likes to be in charge?” Be honest, how many of you like to be in charge, you like to be in control? Most of us, even if we don't like the responsibility, do like to be in control. It's a natural thing. That doesn't mean it's right, but it is natural.

I suspect that most all of the conflicts and battles of life boil down to issues of control. Republicans want control of the congress and Democrats don't want to give it up. Israelis want to control Palestinians and Palestinians resist. Sunnis and Shiites fight for control of Iraq. Americans want to control illegal immigration. Parents want to have control over their children and once they reach a certain age, and a very early one at that, children begin to resist their parent's control over them. Husbands want to control their wives and wives want to control their husbands. And all of us would like to have at least some control over our health, our time, the price of oil and how much money the Government should really get.

We like to have our way. We want what we want. All of us were that way when we were children and many of us haven't changed at all. That's why so many people complain or whine or gripe all the time. They are unhappy because they are not in control.

Our desire to be in control leads to anger, strife, discontentment, unhealthy competition. And it also leads to a lot of fear and a sense that if we don't assert ourselves we'll miss out on what we deserve.

Really, our desire or need for control is a misdirected attempt to find security. To find a place of stability and peace where we know we are safe. And as long as we attempt to find security by being in control, we are going to find ourselves frustrated and angry.

Question: "What is a Controlling Spirit?"

When someone "has a controlling spirit," it doesn't necessarily mean that they have a demon that is instigating the control. It can simply mean that they are yielding to their own human desire to be in control.

- One that yields to their own human desire to be in control?
- Manipulation of others.

The controlling spirit likely stems our tendency toward "pride of life" that John mentioned in 1 John 2:16, because it involves trying to get others to do our will. It doesn't have to be limited to just people. In our pride, we may even try to get God to do our will through selfish or controlling prayers.

The controlling spirit typically uses manipulation to accomplish its purposes. Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines manipulation as: "to control or play upon by artful, unfair, or insidious means especially to one's own advantage; to change by artful or unfair means so as to serve one's purpose."

As we can see by that definition, manipulation is self-centered and has nothing to do with love.

There have been many people throughout history that have exhibited Controlling Spirits.

Illus: Historical Examples of Control Freaks

There are many examples in the Bible and throughout history of people who tried to manipulate or control others. Here are a few:

- Potiphar's wife trying to get Joseph to sleep with her (Genesis 39:6-13)
- Delilah trying to get Sampson to reveal the secret of his strength (Judges 16:5-21)
- Ahab sulking about a vineyard in hopes that his wife Jezebel would get it for him (1 Kings 21:1-15)
- Martha appealing to Jesus to make Mary help her prepare a meal (Luke 10:38-42)
- Elymas the sorcerer trying to turn the proconsul away from Christianity (Acts 13:6-12)
- Jim Jones, David Koresh and other cultic leaders.
- Phillip Garrido. The man who held Jaycee Lee Dugard captive for 18 years controlling and manipulating her throughout her life. Praise God she was set free recently.
- Pinky and the Brain..... "take over the world" mind control.
- Me. Dave! I don't know about you, but I deal with issues of control. I hate to admit that, but I do. I wish that I could stand before you and tell you that I don't have these types of issues, but that would be lying.... For I do. In fact, I really started to come to grips with it last week when in Myrtle Beach with my bride. We were in the hot tub together, what fun, and I realized that I through my conversation with her I was really trying to control her and the situation that we were in. It hit me hard, that I try to control.
- YOU! We all have to deal with this in our lives, for it's human nature to want to control things. But we can't! The controlling spirit likely stems our tendency toward "pride of life" that John mentioned in **1 John 2:16**, because it involves trying to get others to do our will. It doesn't have to be limited to just people. In our pride, we may even try to get God to do If we truly want to walk FREE* then we must be free from the Spirit of Control that attempts to take over our lives.

1 John 2:16

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

Galatians 5:13

You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love.

If we want to make a true IMPACT in life, then we must walk FREE* of trying to control others and from being controlled by others. Last week we talked about the Fear of Man and how we deal with that; being set FREE* from that fear. Today, we'll deal with being FREE* from the desire to have to be in control of everything.

Have you ever felt that you were being controlled or manipulated by someone? Do you have an excessive fear of being controlled? Do you think that you might be a domineering, controlling person yourself? What is the Christian's response to these questions? Keep in mind, much of the teaching that I'll be sharing with you today comes out of Robert Liardon's book, "Breaking Controlling Powers" who deals with some of these questions.

First of all, not all control is negative control. We need positive control; ie, parents controlling children, governmental laws controlling criminals. But the primary type of control I want to address is negative control, either in the natural realm or in the demonic realm. It is what I'll refer to as a "Controlling Spirit". Again, this does not mean that a person is possessed by a demon or anything like that, but that the enemy uses us to try and control others.

Jesus does not want you to be controlled in a negative manner by anyone. The Pharisees could not control Jesus, Peter or Paul. They all defeated the controlling spirits by being filled with the Holy Spirit. Controlling spirits working through people will try to keep your highest potential from being in God.

Understanding Controlling Spirits

If we want to be FREE* from these spirits, then we have to know as much as we can about them.... At least that will help. So...here are 3 Questions...

Question #1: How Do We Control?

1. Emotional manipulation.

(examples: a baby crying to get his way, a boss going into a rage to intimidate an employee, a spouse giving the silent treatment to manipulate the other spouse)

2. Spiritual manipulation.

(examples: a false vision – for instance, Christ will return in 1988; false prophecies, laying a guilt trip on someone through "God told me" statements)

3. Verbal manipulation.

(examples are words of failure and defeat, unnatural obligation, guilt, criticism, intimidation)

4. Physical manipulation.

(example: we often times can physically manipulate someone by our actions)

Question #2: How do you know if you are a controller? Those who operate with this spirit of control have particular tendencies. ... **Controller Tendencies**

Controllers Have a Tendency to...

Circle the number that best reflects your life in the following tendencies.

1. ...feel possessive towards other people. They feel threatened over new relationships a person close to them has or finds. They try to dominate every area of a person's life. They feel jealousy towards a person. They are also over-protective toward those near them. They allow their lives to totally revolve around nurturing and developing another human being. They control people with flattery at the same time.

0 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10
Never ... Hardly Ever ... Sometimes ... Quite Often ... All the Time

2. ...not let other opinions be voiced or discussed. It's usually their way or the highway so to say. They give the feeling like their opinion is the only route to take. They can be very critical in the process. They criticize every move and every statement the other person makes.

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3. ...make plans for the person they control without their permission. Have you ever listened to a husband volunteer their wife, or vice versa, or volunteer the kids to do something. This is a form of control.

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4. ...think the person they control owes them something, and they demand that they pay them back.

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5. ...only feel important when giving orders or commands. You're not content to receive orders, you have to be giving them.

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6. ...always walk ahead of the people they are with. You have a plan and you don't really care about the plan of those behind you. You say you do, but your actions speak otherwise. You can observe them walking in the mall or in a public place; a man will walk ahead of his family; leading the way, but down deep, there may be issues of control that he's dealing with. Now, not always is this the case, but it is a tendency to watch for in your own life.

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7. ...finish the sentences of those they are talking to. They tend to not look at the person they are talking to. Usually they spend their side of the conversation figuring out what they are going to be saying next instead of listening.

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8. ...try and "fix" those closest to them. They also do their best to "change" them, to what they think the person should be like; which is obviously better in their opinion.

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Question #3: What causes people to become controllers?

1. Hurts and wounds – People get hurt and vow not to get hurt again so they control their whole world.

2. Environment – People who grow up in an atmosphere of control tend to do the very thing they hate when they grow older.

3. Free will – a choice. Some people just choose to be controllers.

4. Insecurity

5. Laziness

6. Pride

So.... If you're dealing with a Spirit of Control...understand this; God wants me to be under the control of only one spirit, i.e. the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:12-16, Galatians 5:22-25). The Holy Spirit has set us free to live for righteousness and no longer be under sin's rule.

If we've been guilty of trying to control others or yielding to someone with a controlling spirit, we'll need to repent in either case and reaffirm our allegiance to God by yielding to the Holy Spirit.

Prayer:

“Father in Heaven, I repent from any attempts I've made to control or manipulate others (specify). I repent from yielding to pride and exerting my will over others. I repent from making any manipulative prayers. I also repent for any times that I have yielded to a controlling spirit and resisted the Holy Spirit (specify).

I renounce any types of controlling spirits in my life. I break the bonds of these controlling spirits. I command them to leave me right now. I take back the authority I've given to these spirits.

Please forgive me and cleanse me from my sin by the blood of Jesus. I reaffirm that you are my Lord and Savior today. I am sensitive and responsive to the Holy Spirit's leadership. I yield my will to your will, Father. Please fill me with your love for people and help me discern any controlling spirits that may be at work in my daily circumstances.

Thank you, Father! I praise you now and forever. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.”

Controlling Spirits must be dealt With to Live FREE*

And as you do...

You watch...you wait...you'll see!