



Need for Control

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Q—In which area of your life are you desperately grasping for control?

Ways we grasp for control:

- ✓ Control of other people
- ✓ Control of our circumstances
- ✓ Control of ourselves

Sermon in a Sentence: A true test of our faith in God is when we relinquish the need to be in control of our lives.

By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. Hebrews 11:8 (NIV)

Genesis 15:1, 5-6 (NLT)

Genesis 16:1–4 (NIV)

Three control questions to ask yourself:

⇒ **Is it worth my concern?**

"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her." Luke 10:41–42 (NIV)

⇒ **Is it mine to control?**

"...Today—at the latest, tomorrow—we're off to such and such a city for the year. We're going to start a business and make a lot of money." You don't know the first thing about tomorrow. You're nothing but a wisp of fog, catching a brief bit of sun before disappearing. James 4:13–14 (The Message)

1 Peter 1:13

⇒ **Is it for God alone?**

Philippians 4:6–7 (NIV)

Genesis 22:2, 11-14a (NIV)

Q—Who or what is your greatest concern, that you are needing to lay on the altar before God today?



Study & Discussion for Your Next Small Group

Theme: *God, you want me to do what?!*

Warm Up: What has been the greatest sacrifice you have had to make as a parent, or that your parents (or another person) have made for you?

Sermon Response: What was a “take-away” you received from Sunday’s message? What was mentioned as some of the ways we grasp for control?

Read: Genesis 22:1-18

Discuss:

- What type of emotions does this story stir up? What bothers you most about it?
- Knowing God waited 25 years to provide Abraham with a son, how would you expect Abraham to react to God’s instructions? What do you imagine would be 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 is 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 make a great sacrifice? At what expense to you and others? What was the result? How did it change you based on your obedience?
- What would be an example from your life - in the past or currently - of something you need(ed) to relinquish control of in order to follow Jesus more fully? How could you use prayer to do so?

Prayer: Share needs and also ways God has answered prayer in your group.