

## Idols Series | Week 5: CONTROL

**Series Overview:** For this series, we are striving to go deep into the students' hearts. We are going after their hearts because the Lord wants their hearts! I believe this will be a revealing series as we are going to ask the students to look deeply into their lives and see where the idols of power, control, approval, and comfort are prevalent. Even for us leaders, it will be a testing series! These idols pull us away from loving Jesus fully, and we want the Holy Spirit to reveal to our students where they are feeding into these idols and how they can love Jesus even more so!

**Week Overview:** This week, we are focusing on **the Control Idol**. A tendency of the control idol is to have a certain mastery over life, and with that comes 'preparation' and 'performance' in life. Essentially, we can control the outcomes of things based on our preparation. The tension within this is we want to be people who are prepared, Christ calls us toward this (1 Peter 3:15), but we also need to understand that we cannot control situations because God is in control. This tension between preparation and performance is a tough concept, but I am hoping with this discussion we can squeeze out some good concepts to bring knowledge into students' minds!

**Main Idea:** The Lord wants our hearts, not our performance

**Control Idol Tendencies:**

- Seek: Certain Mastery over life
- Greatest Fear: Uncertainty
- People Feel: Condemned
- Problem Emotion: Anxiety/Worry

**Student Ministry Vision:**

- Here at \_\_\_\_\_ (insert student ministry name), we want you to learn, live and give the Gospel

- In short, we want you to love Jesus

#### Series Vision:

- Weed
  - Just pull the top off- looks nice for a couple of days but the weed comes back
  - Get the whole root out to fully kill the weed
  - To replace idols so they do not grow back, we need to rejoice in the things Jesus provides to replace them
- Loving idols instead of loving Jesus
  - Serving these idols impedes us from fully loving Jesus
  - These root idols are seeking to serve ourselves

Idol Definition: Anything more fundamental than God to your happiness, meaning in life, or identity

Intro DQ: **What are you certain of in your daily life?**

- With this question, we are focusing on the idea of assurances in the students' lives
  - Things they don't have to worry about because they know they will happen.
- This goes along with our main idea because we will talk about control and how maybe things in life aren't so certain!
  - Uncertainty is one of the greatest fears of people with the control idol
- Once again, promote a biblical and loving culture in your group!
  - Think about the 'one-anothers' from Scripture!

#### Activity/Idol Tendencies:

- Seek: Certain Mastery over life
- Greatest Fear: Uncertainty
- People Feel: Condemned
- Problem Emotion: Anxiety/Worry

- Activity/Illustration:
  - Performance vs. Preparation tension

DQ of Idol Tendencies: **Have you ever felt like you did everything right but didn't receive the outcome you thought was right?**

- **With this question, I want the students to think about a time when they prepared well, but their performance did not coincide**
- **This happens all the time**
- **What we need to understand is that we cannot control every situation**
- **God is in control**
  - **So even when we think we prepare well but don't perform well, we can look to the Lord and learn from what He is teaching us!**
  - **Therefore, our worship of Him is so important.**
- **Extra questions to help discussion:**
  - What kind of steps do you take to get prepared for performances?
  - Has there been a time when you prepared a great deal, but it didn't pay off? – think of a game, test, or another type of performance.
  - Was there a time when you didn't prepare but performed well?

Teaching:

- Jesus is not in the business of behavior modification
  - Jesus is in the business of your heart changing
- Yes, we should work heartily for the Lord
  - 1 Cor 10:31
- But our aim should not be to just want what we want!
  - We should work hard and trust in what the Lord brings!
- Job application, interview
  - God is in control
  - That doesn't mean we shouldn't pursue it!

Scripture: Job 38:1-11

- Context
  - Job underwent some very hard things
  - Friends try to encourage him, but not well though.
  - Job wasn't seeing the goodness and power of God
  - God answers him this way
- Explanation of reading:
  - God is saying He has done all these things.
    - Has Job? No, because he isn't God!
- Once again, God wants our hearts, not our performance
- God wants Job to put his heart in the right place
  - Worship of God

Final DQ/Encouragements: **Where's your worship? Is it towards the God of the universe or towards an idol of controlling situations to what you want?**

- Worship is a lifestyle!
  - Worship is not just about singing!
- **With this question, I am hoping students will say something like winning a game or getting straight A's.**
  - **Once again, we should strive to be excellent in everything we do to show our love for Jesus**
  - **However, if these worldly pursuits control our life and take our joy away from serving the Lord- Our heart is not right for worship**
- Another way to ask this question: **Is there something that you want to control over what God may want for you?**

Extra Passage: Matthew 6:25-34

- Going along with the problem emotion of anxiety this passage speaks to anxiety
- **Use this passage if you believe your group needs this!**

Prayer:

- From our conversation, is there something you seek to control that you need to give up? Ask for prayer to do that