

Slavery to Control

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[0:00] Good morning. That's terrible. I know Tobin says that all the time, but that really was bad. Good morning. Oh, so much better. Good. My name is Chris, for those of you who don't know me.

I know this is a kind of holiday time, so there's a few of us here today, but God is with us, and he wants to speak to us this morning. For those of us who are Christians, who have trusted in Christ, the Bible has a lot of promises.

We've been looking at some of these promises in the series we talked about in our identity in Christ. We've been seeing that it tells us that sin's power, if we've trusted in Christ, is broken in our lives because Christ has set us free.

It tells us that if you have trusted in Christ, you have resurrection power, you have forgiveness, you have a new hope, you have a new purpose, you have a new life, a new identity, and everything that belongs to Jesus, who is the king of the universe, is yours in him.

We stand loved by the one who determines the whole of history. We have a heavenly father who is so wealthy that Forbes wouldn't have a category for him, and he is so generous towards his children.

[1:20] That is who we are if we are Christian, if we've trusted in Christ. But Gandhi, that great Christian, said, he wasn't a Christian, but said, just testing, he said, you Christians look after a document containing enough dynamite to blow all civilization to pieces, turn the world upside down, and bring peace to a battle-torn planet.

But you treat it as little, as nothing more. Listen to this. You treat it as nothing more than a piece of literature. That was Gandhi. He said, as Christians, we take the promises and the Bible, and we often treat it as little more than just literature.

I've read Lord of the Rings, but I don't wake up every morning wondering if I'm able to destroy the ring of power. I don't wake up thinking Frodo and Bilbo play such an important part in my life. They don't really affect my everyday decision-making because it's literature. But Gandhi saw something in the lives of Christians around him, and so often I see this actually in my own life, that there is a disconnect between what we say we believe about God and his promises to us, and actually our experience of him in our lives.

And I don't know if you ever feel like God's word is just literature for you, that maybe that revolutionary dynamite that God wants to make it work in your soul so it transforms you, giving you a joy and a peace that no circumstance can overcome.

[3:14] Maybe that is not always our experience of life. Maybe there is sometimes a gap between what we say we believe and what our thoughts, what our words, what our desires and actions show us that we truly love.

And that's what we're going to be looking at. After looking at the promises and our identity, our walk, the power that we have in Christ, we want to look at what actually holds us back from really enjoying some of what God has for us as his people.

So we're going to start just a very short series looking at some characters in the book of Exodus. And they show us some very interesting things about our lives.

They show us what some of the idols, the things that enslave us and ensnare us, even when the Bible says that if you're a Christian, he has set you free.

So we're going to have a little look at this idea of idols. And we talk about the idea of idols quite a lot in Watermark, and there's a reason for that. A guy called Martin Lloyd-Jones, who's a famous English preacher in the last century, said, An idol is anything in my life that occupies a place that should be occupied by God alone.

[4 : 31] An idol is something that holds such a controlling position in my life that it moves and rouses and attracts me so easily that I give my time, attention, and money to it effortlessly.

Simply put, an idol is whatever or whoever you and I value and give central value in our lives. Whatever controls your heart controls your life, controls your decisions, controls everything that you do. And if there's anything that you're more consumed with than with God, the Bible's going to say, if you're trusting it, it's going to enslave you.

It's going to enslave you. So we're going to have a look today at one of these idols. And if we want to get serious about God, if we want God to really let those promises live in our lives, then we've got to start working out what are the things which enslave us, and working on a series, that cycle of repentance and faith, which a couple of weeks ago, Jeremy talked about.

So looking at control, we're going to look at this story, Pharaoh versus God. We're then going to look at us versus God. Then we're going to look at how we relinquish control.

[5 : 57] Pharaoh versus God, us versus God, and then how we relinquish control. So this story is familiar to some of us.

But this story comes against a backdrop. In the Old Testament, there is one hero in the Old Testament. That's God. God is the hero, and God is into people, and God is into blessing and making promises to his people.

And the first thing he tells Adam and Eve to do in the Garden of Eden, he tells them, okay, he blesses them, and he says, have lots of kids, multiply, and trust my word that I bring to you.

That's what he says. Adam and Eve and everyone after them fail to trust God's word, and judgment comes upon them. The cycle continues. God then calls a man called Abraham, and he says, I want to bless you, and I want to give you many, many descendants who will multiply throughout the earth, and there will be blessing to the whole earth.

And Abraham trusts God's word, and his family over generations ends up prospering and multiplying. They end up down in Egypt. And then in Egypt, as they are growing and growing and growing into a great nation, and everyone is thinking, well, maybe the promises are coming true.

[7 : 21] The story takes a turn, and that's where we're going to pick up today. A new king takes over in Egypt, in this northern part of Egypt called Goshen, the most powerful man in the Western Hemisphere.

But he doesn't know God, and he doesn't know the story of Israel at all. Instead, he looks at the growth of this ethnic minority as is happening in so many nations around the world today, and he saw them as a threat to his rule.

And just as with every micromanager, every dictator, every tiger parent who has to be in control, Pharaoh lived in fear of the things not working out according to his plan.

In fact, he was cripplingly insecure. And you might like to look at regimes like North Korea or other dictators to see the way this works out.

So Pharaoh gets his people together to come up with a plan to neutralize this threat. He's got to fix the situation. That's where we pick up the story.

[8 : 27] So in verse 9, have a look in your bulletins. He says, He says, There are too many of those Israelites in our country, and they're becoming more powerful than we are. If we don't outsmart them, their families will keep growing larger.

And if our country goes to war, they could easily fight on the side of our enemies and escape from Egypt. He's like a boss who realizes some of his employees are smarter than him and more capable than him.

And so he's got to launch his strategy to keep himself in control. So his first solution, his first fix, is he turns them from farmers into slaves.

If you look at verse 11 to 14, basically what he does, he commissions them to build two cities. And many scholars believe that actually these two cities would have served as storehouses for military equipment to build up his army to ensure his military power in the region.

So he was going to use power and control over the Israelites to make himself even stronger in the whole region. And what he does is, with the men far away from their families, suffering under the labor of work and the harsh conditions, he's pretty sure, well, they're not going to be having more children during this, so things are going to be okay.

[9 : 52] But when you try and be in control, you will seek to crush and oppress other people. You put them in a cage of your own expectations, of your own demands.

You will try and enslave them according to your own little world. Maybe you will even punish them if they don't do what you want them to do. But in this story, Pharaoh wasn't in control.

God was in control. And in spite of everything he did, the families kept multiplying and multiplying and multiplying and took over yet more land.

Solution one, failed. You know when you try and fix something and it doesn't work out, fear, stress begins to rise. That's what's going on among the Egyptians.

Insecurity. So now, solution two. He calls in two of the Hebrew midwives in charge of the baby. He tells them, okay, you've got to kill any baby boys that are born.

[10:51] That's verse 15, 16. And he tells them, if you're quick, you could maybe claim that the babies were still born and the gender gap between men and women would grow so large that the women would have to marry Egyptians and then there would be no problem because basically they'd have to become Egyptians.

Great fix. Pharaoh's got this one sorted. Unfortunately, verse 18 to 21, the solution fails because those midwives who Pharaoh wanted to control, they weren't going to be controlled because they feared God more than they feared Pharaoh and they don't do what he asks them to do.

And when Pharaoh finds out they haven't done what he wanted them to do, he gets angry and he gets mad and he calls them in. Fortunately, Pharaoh's not very good at biology because he accepts, I mean, I don't know why he accepts, you know, Hebrew women have babies quicker than Egyptians, but, you know, he's Pharaoh.

He's got other things to think about than biology. But he, he's failed. The fix has failed. So he comes up with solution number three.

He then calls for the whole Egyptian nation to join in a flat-out genocide against the newborn Hebrew babies. And you see through this story, you see a progression that always happens with an idol of control when you have to be in control.

[12:23] You see, when everything's working out, it's fine, but when your plans are threatened, you try and fix the situation. And if you can't get control, then you begin to fear and you begin to stress.

And if you can't then fix the problem within your fear and distress, your stress, then you get frustrated and angry and you begin to take it out on other people. And it may even lead to murder. Maybe not physical murder, but murderous thoughts, angry words, a heart that's filled with bitterness, resentment, because you feel helpless, vulnerable, insecure.

And what you think you need to give you fulfillment is being snatched away like one of those balloons that you just see a kid trying to chase after, but they can never quite grasp hold of. It's scary. And Pharaoh thought that his biggest issue was the Israelites. But what he didn't realize was that his control idol had blinded him to the fact that he was actually making war on God.

[13:30] Pharaoh was rebelling against God and everything that God had planned for his people. He was afraid of what God's blessing would mean. And because when you and I want to be in control, what we're saying to God is, get out of the driver's seat.

Let me take the steering wheel. I don't like the direction you're heading in. I've got to be in control. I'm taking over because I know what's best for me. But the thing is, when you try and have two drivers at the same time, that never ends well.

You see, it takes Pharaoh ten plagues, the death of his firstborn son, the destruction of a large part of his army to realize that maybe I'm actually not totally in control. What at the moment for you is not going the way you want it to?

Where do you feel helpless at the moment? What are you most afraid of at the moment? Because lurking there will be tendencies to try and grasp control.

So we've looked at how Pharaoh does this with God. Let's look at us now with God. I don't know if you're like me, but I don't consider myself to be a dictator with genocidal tendencies.

[14:59] I personally haven't ordered the mass killing of an ethnic minority at Queen Mary. I don't feel like I have the same amount of power as Pharaoh. So I wonder, how do this connect to me?

And yet, if you just think about it for just a minute, I just begin to see that the same roots that are in Pharaoh's heart are actually deep down and linger in my own heart and they enslave me time and time and time again.

And they stop me from really enjoying Christ in my everyday walk. You see, an idol of control is a longing for everything to go according to my plan. I have to be right.

It has to work within this way. I was in Shanghai last week. We were on the, we were buying tickets for the metro and we got to the ticket machine and I punched in the destination and Fiona, my wife, got out some 10 yuan note, put it in the machine and it spits it right out again.

So I flatten it, okay, give it back to her. She puts it in the machine, spits it right out again. Third time, try it again, spits it out again. Fourth time, try it again. By that time, I'm frustrated. I've had enough. I'm like, okay, I'm going over to the next can.

[16:11] I've got to work a different machine. It's going to work in that one. So I'm over there but Fiona stays in the other lane, other machine and she keeps trying and I'm standing over here.

She's standing over there like just about three, three machines down the road and she's still trying and I'm looking over here. There's two people in front of me and I'm thinking, why can't you stop being so stupid?

The machine's not working and so I tell her, I shout to her, come over here. Stop being an idiot. She ignores me completely.

So I go further forward and I can see her, she's still going, still going and so I shout to her again and you know when somebody doesn't do what you want, you get a little bit more annoyed, right?

And so I'm getting more frustrated so my tone rises. I mean, I'm a fairly chilled out guy normally but you know, so I shout, come over here.

[17:14] She ignores me, I get to the front of the queue, the machine works, I type it in, I say, come over here. She comes immediately over here, puts the 10 yen note in, it works, we get our tickets. And then I spend two minutes telling her how inconsiderate she was, how stupid to keep trying in that machine.

And I went on because I was right. My machine worked, your machine didn't. But she was hurt because the words that I used and the tone that I'd used was harsh.

Because, you see, I thought that my way was the right way. And I wanted to cage her in into the expectations that I had, the demands that I had for what she should do at that moment.

Now, she explained to me that she's had many situations where actually she's tried 20 times and after the 25th time, it's actually worked. I've never experienced that. But, in her mind, that, in fact, we didn't get the tickets any quicker by me shouting at her.

In fact, she came, immediately I got to the front, she was there, she put them out there, we got the tickets. Why was I so consumed by this? Why did I actually hurt and unlovingly use words to criticize my wife?

[18:43] Well, it's because I want to be in control. That's how pharaohs work. I could have waited, asked her to come over and then patiently waited till the front and, you know, it could have, what I was doing could have even been the right thing to do, I think it was, but my way of fixing things is to say things like, why can't you?

Why can't you ever listen to me? Why can't you stop being inconsiderate? And, you know, when you hear yourself saying those words, that's probably control that is coming up because people don't get built up and encouraged by those words, they get crushed by them.

And you'll end up, like me, hurting the ones you love because you have to be in control and have everything the way you want it. There's so many areas where we do this.

In parenting, we love our kids, but it's sometimes such a struggle for our love and the good, healthy boundaries that we want to set for our kids to not shift into control.

Paul Tripp, who's a counselor, writes a very helpful article about controlling parenting. He says that when kids are young, you as the parent have a large amount of control.

[20:08] You decide their routines, you decide their dress sense, you decide the food they eat. But every day they grow, they are learning to be independent. And he says this, he says, the goal of parenting is not to retain tight-fisted control over our children in an attempt to guarantee their safety and our sanity.

It isn't to conform my children to my image, but to work so that they're conformed to the image of Christ. My goal isn't to clone my tastes, opinions, and habits within my kids.

I'm not looking for my image in them. I'm looking to see Christ's. The goal is to be used of God to instill in our children an ever-maturing self-control through the principles of the word and to allow them to exercise ever-widening circles of choice, control, and independence.

Because we say, I'm not trying to be in control, I'm trying to do what's best for them, but how do you know if you've gone from healthy boundaries to control, or just look at the level of frustration that

you feel.

Observe the kinds of words you use to try and get your kids, your colleagues, anybody else to do what you want them to do. See your reactions when your kids or other people fail to live up to your expectations.

[21 : 39] For those things will be signs of whether you have a control problem. Controllers like me hate uncertainty.

Controllers like me are perfectionists who struggle to delegate to other people because I can always do it better than everyone else. Controllers are planners who hate it when others upset their plans. And our stress and our fear which results often ends up hurting the ones that we love the most. And Exodus, this story of Pharaoh is trying to tell us this is not just a horizontal problem, this is also a vertical problem.

With Fiona, I was saying to God, you're not in control of this, I am. So I've got to fix it. And if I can't fix it, then I get angry. I say my plan is best for my life, I can't trust you God.

And that's at the heart of what the Bible calls sin. And the consequences of that, of telling God, get out of my life, I know how to do it, is judgment.

[22 : 50] It's bad news. That's what Pharaoh experienced. So that's how Pharaoh deals with God. That's how we can often deal with God.

But how do we relinquish control in our lives? Let God be God of our lives. Well, you and I won't let control, go of control, until we realize two things.

One thing, it should be obvious, but we're not in control. Even trying to let go of control, because sometimes we try and control our letting go of control.

And that's just messed up. because, think about it, go back to your kids again. Can you control your kids? Well, you can control the outward aspects of their diet, their fashion sense, until they get older and they become independent.

But when they're independent, that's scary, because we get scared because we love our kids, because they might make the wrong choices. They might make the wrong friends. They might get the grades or the schools that we don't want them to get into.

[23 : 59] And you can try and control people on the outside, but you cannot control how they feel on the inside. You cannot control what other people think of you.

You cannot control the global financial markets. You cannot control the weather. You can't control other drivers on the road. You can't control how fast the person in front of you is walking. I wish I could. You can't control whether your friends or your spouse listens to you or not.

You can't control your future. In fact, there's probably more outside of your control. There is more outside of your control than you could possibly imagine.

You can't control where you were born. You can't control who your parents were. You can't control your past experiences. Now, we can seek to influence and shape decisions.

That's right. But thinking you can control your destiny is an illusion. And you'll become manipulative, inflexible, unloving if you really believe that illusion.

[25 : 02] You know, we live life as if we're like taking a wild lion for a walk on a dog leash. You know, and for a while it seems like, you know, he's pretty tame.

I'm managing to do this. I can handle it. It's fine. But you know, it just takes one swipe of the paw of the lion to realize that you were never in control of that situation. And you're a fool if you think you are really the master.

Don't walk a lion out here today because you're always sooner or later going to realize that you're not in control. Pharaoh thought he was.

If he'd realized sooner that he wasn't, just think how much hassle it would have saved him. The book of Exodus would have been so much shorter. But, can I be real that many of us think we can actually control God by coming to church, being nice people, doing the right things, putting offering in, doing all those good things, and then we expect him to answer our prayers the way we want them to be answered, to fulfill our plans the way we want them to be fulfilled, and then we get annoyed with God if he doesn't do exactly the way we wanted him to do, or maybe we just think, okay, God can't handle, God, you can do the little church bit, my work bit, I can handle that because I know how to deal with that, you clearly don't.

I've got an education. I've been on a training course. I know how to do it. Sometimes we say, God, okay, you can deal with my family, but not my work.

[26 : 39] Sometimes we say, okay, God, you can deal with my work, but then I'll pursue unhealthy relationships because, God, you can't handle my relationship status. I want to be in control of that.

But the thing is, you're not the Lord, the controller of your work. You're not the Lord of your family. You're not the Lord of your relationships. He is.

He is. And that's the second thing we need to remember. So the first, you're not in control. The second thing is, God is great, and he is in control.

So I don't have to be. Christopher Hitchens, who was a very famous atheist, wrote a book called *God is Not Great*. And one of his biggest gripes against God was that he saw him as this kind of tyrannical dictator.

If he exists, then he's like this big brother figure who kind of is watching your every step or kind of slap you around the face if you do something wrong. And he says, if there is a God, I wouldn't want to follow him because he wants to spoil my fun and make me slaves just to his own wishes.

[27 : 56] And I think Christopher Hitchens actually said something which many of us, even if we're Christians, would not say, but actually in our hearts we think.

Because secretly we fear not having our hands on the steering wheel means that actually God is not good enough to steer me in a direction where he will get the best for my life.

Only I know how to handle my problems to get the best for my life. And my insecurity is so obvious when I don't know what to do. Some of you may be facing situations where you don't know what to do at the moment and it can be terrifying because we, and we worry, and you know what worry is? Worry is trying to get control of something you can't control. It's desperately trying to get hold of that balloon, but it's escaping you. It's the way that we try and hold on to what we can't hold on to.

Life, we think, can sometimes be out of control, but it's never out of control. In this story, apart from God, there are two other kind of mini heroes.

[29 : 09] These are the Hebrew midwives. They could have felt everything was going wrong because this maniac pharaoh seems to be controlling everything. But at the risk of their own lives, they chose to disobey pharaoh.

And normally, you don't mess with a control freak like pharaoh. But they, and the Bible, the Hebrew word says, they feared God. That's why their names are in the story.

We don't actually have the name of the pharaoh here. Nobody knows his name because actually, the Bible is saying that these people, these two midwives who are named are the people who count in God's great plan because they are walking in fear of him.

Because you see, pharaoh feared losing control, but the Hebrew women feared God. They trusted in him because they knew there is only one person who's got the power, who's got the grace, who's got the love to handle this one.

And they could trust him because he's faithful. And they knew that the promise that he had given to his people, he was already fulfilling. And as they look back, they could see he's being faithful, so he's going to be faithful again, so we can trust him.

[30 : 17] And they didn't know what was going to happen as a result of their decision. They didn't know what the future was going to hold. They didn't even know whether it was going to work out okay, but they said, I can trust you, God, because I see that you're faithful.

And you see what happens? The midwives themselves get kids. Did you read that? The midwives get blessed as well, and they get part of this promise of blessing, of multiplication.

God works through their faithfulness. The reason we try and control is fear. We fear life is out of control, but the Bible's message is for you and for me right now.

From the day you were born to the day you die, God has got every single minute, every single second, every crisis, every success, every situation in his hands.

I don't know what you're facing right now, but he's got it. He's got it in his hands. There's never been one moment in your life where your life has been out of control. Now, I find that hard because, you know, I sure feel like life is out of control sometimes.

[31 : 33] But you know why I feel like it's out of control? It's because it's out of my control. It's not out of his control. And it's just when life is not going the way I want it to work according to my plans, that's when I feel it's out of control.

But God is saying, I am great. My plan is much bigger, much greater, much more beautiful. In fact, I have plans to bless you, not to harm you. Plans to give you a hope and a future.

And we take that promise and we say, okay, I've got plans to bless my plans, plans to give me a hope for my future with everything that I want to do. And he says, no, no, no, my plans are better than your plans.

And God being in control doesn't mean we kind of sit back and say, well, God's in control. I don't have to go to work. Okay? I don't have to feed myself. You know, leave the chopsticks there, they'll kind of magically food will come into my mouth.

You know, a farmer goes out to sow seed because that's his job. but he knows that the growing of the crops is out of his hands.

[32 : 41] His job is to plant the seed. He doesn't control the weather. He's not in control of the results. He's just faithful with what he's got. If there's no God, the world is a scary place and you have to grasp for control or you'll go insane.

But unlike Christopher Hitchens says, there is a God who is in control, who's not a dictator and he's your heavenly father. More than that, he's got a plan which is for your good and for his glory and it's much better than you could imagine.

You see, in the story, Pharaoh tried to control everything. But God had a bigger idea.

Chapter 2, you see, a baby is born into an Israelite family and the very plan that Pharaoh had used to try and control the Israelites is the very plan that God uses to actually bring a deliverer who is Moses who hides him in a basket.

He's then taken by the Pharaoh's daughter and he is basically protected from the Pharaoh by being brought into Pharaoh's own house right under the nose of Pharaoh and he's the one that God is going to use to deliver his people.

[34 : 09] Now, would you have planned that? I don't think if I had planned the story, I would have planned that that way. But God has a bigger plan that he's working out. You see, when God's in control, you see, he's doing something so much bigger.

Moses wasn't the only one who was a deliverer in Egypt. You see, 1,000, 1,500 years later, there was another control freak called Herod who also tried to control God's plans by killing baby boys in Bethlehem.

but there was one baby boy who God gave a dream to his parents and told them to escape to Egypt because God was going to make this baby boy a deliverer and a rescuer like no other.

You see, Herod could not have imagined this plan but God knew what he was up to all the time because that baby boy was Jesus. Jesus, the one who in Philippians it says, didn't grasp hold of control to stay kind of seizing power for himself but he humbled himself, made himself a servant and came to serve us by dying on a cross, taking that judgment that control freaks like Pharaoh deserve and like you and me deserve so that we could enjoy relationship with our Father knowing that he is in control and we don't have to be.

We don't have a tyrannical God. We have a God whose love is endless for you and for me and if he's loving and if he's in control, why do we so want to hold on to control?

[36 : 03] you don't replace an idol of control by stopping trying to be in control.

You replace it by seeing that Jesus is the ultimate one who has died for you, gave up his life for you and you can trust him because he's good and as you walk in trust of him, your faith in him will grow because he always, always, always keeps his promises.

I don't know what's happening in your life right now but there will be things this week where you are going to be tempted to grasp hold of and to stress, to get angry, to get frustrated, to be manipulative, to give people a silent treatment, to be critical.

You're going to be tempted in all of these ways and God says, listen, will you trust me who's got this situation better than you have it? If you're not a Christian, your whole life in some way or other is basically trying to be in control.

It may seem to work for a while but like that lion, the lion of life is not tame. it's on your shoulders the whole of life.

[37 : 29] That is a heavy weight to bear and it may not just be you but it may be the people around you who suffer the consequences of your control. God's call for you is to respond today and to repent which means to say, God, I've tried to take control of my life.

Forgive me. I've tried to do your job which is only job that you can do but I want you to be my Lord. I don't want to be the one who is Lord of all of my life because I can't save myself.

Some of you need to pray that today. Some of us are Christians. Some of us think we're Christians because we come to church but if we're to look at our lives, your finger marks are all over every part of your life.

You allow God into one closet in your heart but the rest of your house is your domain to rule and to reign. You don't want God to drive your car because you're afraid he's going to mess up your plans. He's going to ruin your life and let me tell you, God will ruin your plans but he's got a better one. He's got a better one and the reason sometimes that for me Jesus doesn't thrill me, the reason why if I ask you honestly and me honestly do I overflow with a love and a peace and a contentment in Christ at the moment.

[39 : 02] One of the reasons why if I asked your colleagues, if I asked your family, do you see Christ working in their life in a joy-filled way? One of the reasons why in some areas of our lives we might have to honestly say I'm not sure that I do is because I've tried to keep hold of it for myself and I'm not a very good dictator of my life and God's call for me and God's call for you is to repent, to lay down those areas where you are trying to hold on and find your security, your identity in what you can do to fix your life.

God's not interested in making your plans work out. Sorry, He's not. But He's got a better plan and His plan is always for your good.

It's always for your good, your joy. It's always for your peace. It's always so that you will experience blessing. So will you, I don't know what that area is in your life, just think what is the areas I have been frustrated in this week?

That may be the area you need to open your closet and say, God, I surrender this to you. I want to trust you. Help me to trust you in this area of your life. I have a short video that I want to show you which I think demonstrates some of how this works.

I need for you. Two ■ λνδᾶ will jump out of the moment where and have you whoress home to example, that I could ride from the side of the or?

[41 : 02] I can't see you if you're listening to me I'll be at a little a little absorb Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[43 : 38] Thank you.

Thank you. You say that after me. God is great. Come on. It's not too long.

You can cope. God is great. God is great. So I do not have to be in control. I want you to be in control. I want you to close your eyes with me.

And I want you to think in your life right now. Where are the areas where I'm afraid to let God, well, have the control that he already has.

Where am I trying to get hold of that steering wheel and not let him be the one who leads and guides me? I don't know what God has for you.

[45 : 06] I don't know what God has for you. Sometimes life can be tough. It was for the Israelites. But God is working something far greater. If you trust him, you will see his plan working amazing.

Let's just pray for a minute. Let's just pray for a minute. Let's just pray for a minute. I think we need to repent in some areas.

Father, I just admit that actually, I don't think I'm a control freak. But there are so many areas of my life where I am.

And when I try and take hold of things, it actually hinders me from enjoying my childlike relationship with my father who I know, who I know loves me and will provide.

I pray for all of us here, Lord. I pray for some people here who really wonder whether God can be trustworthy. Things have happened in life which have been tough.

[46 : 35] You've had to work your way through things. Maybe you feel like you've been successful. And you've been able to do it by yourself.

So why do I need to trust God? Lord, I pray, Lord, for those of us who think that, Lord, you would show us the damage we do to other people, Lord, when we try and take control.

Lord, show us that your way to trust you enables us to love people, love our kids, love our families, love our colleagues, love our friends, love the people around us in so much greater ways than if we have to be the one who sorts it all out.

Father, thank you that you are faithful. Please help us to remember that this week as we go.
In your name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.