

More Than Random - Purity
Questions for Fellowship Groups Week of July 2-8

Opening comments –

Say, Michael shared this week about self-control which is really not about “Self” control at all. Sort of ironic and even paradoxical, but the more we try to control “self” ourselves, the more we say to God, “I’ve got this and if and when I need you, I’ll let you know.”
Read or have someone read Galatians 5:16-25.

The first point Michael made was - Paradox: self-control is not achievable without God.

Ask, what are some things that you attempt to do that you are able to do without God? (This is not designed to be a trick question but to help people begin to realize that there are many things we do daily without a conscience knowledge/inclusion of God.)

Ask, what are some things that you find hard to surrender to God? (possible answers are family, time, relationships, etc.)

Ask, why do you think some things are harder to surrender than others?

Say, In some ways the second point Michael made may seem like a head scratcher.

Personality is not who we are, behavior is who we are.

We can declare we are something or that we have some character quality, but our behavior actually displays what we believe to be true and thus act out. (Remember the example of Michael Scott from The Office declaring bankruptcy or saying “I’m a morning person” but rarely getting up before noon.)

Say, The Apostle Paul talks about this in Romans 7:15-21, (this is a very short paraphrase and summation) where he says the very things he does not want to do he finds himself doing because of sin. That is why we need Christ! He doesn’t employ behavior modification but brings about spiritual transformation in our lives through the Holy Spirit.

Say, Michael shared that Self-control, along with the rest of the fruit of the Spirit, displays Whose we are. Do you remember Michael putting the stool on his head and saying it was a hat? What did you think about that illustration (other than our pastor is weird?)

Say, The Creator gets to decide /define who you are. Ask, how have people tried to describe and define you at times? (Be sensitive to some real hurt being shared here and don’t try to fix it, but really emphasize this next verse after people have responded.)

Read 2 Corinthians 5:17 – we are brand new creations. Not a reboot of the computer but a new operating system is now ours through Christ.

Also, be ready to share these verses to be read that focus on who we really are in Christ. After reading some of these verses **Ask**, who does God say you are? You belong to Him!

John 1:12; Ephesians 1:5; Romans 15:7; Colossians 2:9,10; Romans 6:6; Genesis 1:27; Jeremiah 1:5; 1 Peter 2:9; Galatians 3:27-28

Michael shared these Steps to Identity Change

- Surrender to Jesus – what do you need to surrender today?

- Surrender your personality – Christ determines who you are and as He rules in our lives the totality of the fruit of the Spirit become evident.
- Surrender your purpose/dreams – in our surrender to Christ, our dreams become clearer and less self-centered as we realize Whose we are.
- Get to know God – Are you willing to get into the Word? To pray? **Say**, The Bible is written for us to get to know God, not just to figure out the road map for our life.
- Find contentment and hope in Him **Ask**, where does your self find contentment and hope? **Say** (after answers) *That is exactly who/what controls you; where you find contentment and hope.*

Ask, Is your behavior consistent with Christ? John 1:14 says that Christ was filled with grace and truth and John 1:17 says that grace and truth came through Christ.

Say, Constant surrender is the posture of a believer who is in love with Christ. As we fall more deeply in love with Him, Christ brings about true transformation through the Holy Spirit and He becomes evident in our behavior displaying the fruit of the Spirit.

Pray, asking God to allow us to allow Him to completely have us. Every area. It is a constant surrender and a beautiful step for each of us as we allow Him to rule and reign in our lives.