

ICEBREAKER

Of the RESPONSE messages thus far, which one has spoke to you the most and has caused you to change the way that you respond to the Lord. To recap, the messages have been "I Follow", "I'm Valued", "My Anguish", "My Worship", "I Acknowledge", "My Obedience", "I'm Listening", "To His Glory" and "My Surrender".

SCRIPTURE READING

Read together as a group: **1 Samuel 5 & 6.**
Take turns reading a verse at a time.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- A surrendered heart is a yielded heart, a heart that's impacted and impressionable, rather than a hard heart. Saint Augustine said: "To my God, a heart of flame; to my fellow men, a heart of love; to myself, a heart of steel." The problem arises when we have a heart of steel towards God instead of ourself. When we respond defiantly toward God, we think, "I can manage quite all right on my own."

What are the dangers that we can encounter when our heart is not yielded towards God? Have you encountered a situation(s) that you thought you were fine on your own only to surrender to God later? Share this experience with your group to encourage each other as we can grow from each other's experiences.

- God is jealous for His glory. He is not being selfish or a megalomaniac: God is the one being in the universe (and beyond the universe) for whom it is entirely appropriate that He be glory-seeking, for He is its source, and it is His great pleasure to share His glory with His creatures. It gives us pleasure to adore His glory – that's how He made us.

So the point here is, we need to honour God, rather than hardening our heart. Have any of your actions this past week possibly risked bringing glory to yourself rather than God?

- **Read: 1 Samuel 6:12**

Cows do tend to wander but not these cows. Spiritually speaking we too can wander off the path that we are to be on.

What is the Lord asking you to surrender today so that you can focus on the path He has placed before you? Are you surrendering or wandering?

- Possibly that last question was a hard one to think on the spot and to share with your group at this moment. This next verse may assist in processing those thoughts.

Read Hebrews 13:15 - "Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise— the fruit of lips that confess his name. And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased."

In this verse it references the sacrifices of praise (*we surrender our lips*), of doing good (*we surrender our energy / our hands / our time*), and of our resources (*we surrender our money and 'stuff'*).

We all have surrendered unto God something in our past. Share about what it was you surrendered and what happened after you did.

In light of Hebrews 13:15, let's revisit the previous question. What is God asking you to surrender as a sacrifice of praise unto Him? If you know why feel free to share with your group.

- Philip Zimbardo, a Professor at Stanford University, defines "hedonistic time zone" as seeking pleasure and novelty and living for the moment.

Society in which we live (and are influenced by) pushes, pulls, drags us in directions that we know we ought not to pursue.

In comparison to the above statement, what can we do as followers of Jesus Christ to live our lives while we participate in society but being surrendered to God?

PERSONAL REFLECTION

What is Jesus saying? Where is He asking you to trust Him? Where is He encouraging you these days? Where are you feeling His love in your life? What areas in your lifestyle and a habits is He speaking to you about changing?

What am I doing in RESPONSE?

THIS WEEK'S CHALLENGE

This week is time for prayer and action. Review the last 9 weeks of our RESPONSE series. Take some time in prayer to ask God for direction in your personal response to the changes He has spoken to you already. Surrender those "things" whatever they may be that He has already shown you He desires to bring change(s) into your life.

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